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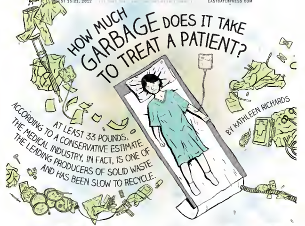

HOW MUCH GARBAGE DOES IT TAKE TO TREAT A PATIENT?

AT LEAST 33 POUNDS, ACCORDING TO A CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATE. THE MEDICAL INDUSTRY, IN FACT, IS ONE OF THE LEADING PRODUCERS OF SOLID WASTE AND HAS BEEN SLOW TO RECYCLE.

BY KATHLEEN RICHARDS

What Transparency? 10
Oakland is spending $102,000 over the next three years on an online campaign finance system that few candidates and political committees are using.

The Future of First Fridays 12
With Art Murmur's main nexus no longer closed to traffic, questions of safety abound.

A More Expansive Outside Lands 36
Comedy, performance art, and audience participation were among the highlights at this year's festival.

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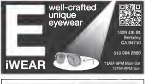
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CONTENTS

NEWS & OPINION

1 **Letters**

Raising the Bar The One Percent doubles down with Paul Ryan.

8 **Seven Days** Chevron is the problem

Legalization Nation Mr. Su ff goes to Washington

Eco Watch Ultra safe bike parking gains popularity

10 **Full Disclosure** What transparency?

11 **News** Bi regional bike repair in Fruitvale

12 **News** The future of First Fridays.

13 **Feature** How much garbage does it take to treat a patient?

ARTS & CULTURE

18 **Culture Spy** Playing with ourselves

19 **Event & Attraction Listings** Pedalfest at Jack London Square.

20 **Museum & Gallery Listings** *Residency Projects* at Kala Art Institute

22 **Theater & Comedy Listings** *Totally Biased with W. Kamau Bell* on FX network.

24 **Lectures & Literary Listings** Rubén Martínez at Books Inc. in Berkeley.

FOOD & DRINK

26 **Dining Review** Hopscotch

27 **What the Fork** New project for former Vaux chef: Café Q

28 **Restaurants & Cafes**

31 **Food & Wine Listings**

MOVIES

32 **Movie Reviews** *Killer Joe* and *Easy Money*

32 **Movie Listings**

35 **One-Night Stands**

MUSIC

36 **Live Review** Outside Lands at Golden Gate Park.

37 **MMS** At de Young Museum.

39 **CD Reviews** Birds & Batteries, Michael Pedicin and Nervebreakers.

38 **Local Licks** Citizen Rhythm Deerhoof Allen Clapp & His Orchestra, and Lega.

40 **Concert & Club Listings**

52 **DJ & Dance Listings**

55 **Aquarium Age**

57 **Savage Love**

On the Cover *Illustration by Natalie Nourigat.*

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Co-Editors Robert Gammon, Kathleen Richards
Music Editor/Staff Writer Rachel Swan
Staff Writer/Web Editor Ellen Cushing
Arts Editor/Page Designer Nate Seltenrich
Calendar Editor Casey McFadden
Contributors Melissa Barnes, Claudia Bauer, Alex Bigman, Darwin BondGraham, David Downs, Chris Duffey, Robert Foss, John Geluardi, Eric Hillebrand, Corey Hill, Mark Kessemann, Kristy Kleiman, Stephen Loewinsohn, Alison Peters, M.T. Richards, Anneli Rufus, Steven Tavares, Jesse Teppenthan, Luke Tsai, Kelly Vance, Ali Winston

Art & Production
Production Manager Nicolle Meng
Art Director Brian Kelly
Graphic Designer Elaine Shaw

Circulation
Circulation Manager Jack Murphy
Couriers Bruce Abbott, Peter Crone, Travis Ferrell, Gary Jay, Thomas Kennedy, Ornetto Quionez Jr., Sarah Trigueiro, Josh Viser

Business
Publisher Jody Colley
Operations and Events Manager Mollie Cohen-Rosenthal
Systems Managers Jason Hinterleiter
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Advertising
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NEWS & OPINION

LETTERS

[illegible]

Softness — or Strategy?

I find Mr. Gammon's interpretation of Ignacio De La Fuente's positions regarding police pensions and staffing utterly unpersuasive. De la Fuente was obviously making tactical moves by opposing the police union's intransigent tactics — he believed that by taking a hard line on police pension contributions and staffing, the union would ultimately agree to concessions. His tactics did not quite have the results he hoped for, but that hardly justifies Gammon's assertion that Kaplan is tougher on crime than De La Fuente.

Eric Tremont, Albany

[illegible] Everyone Should Know

The Alaska Example

Pot has been de-facto legal in Alaska since the mid-Seventies. Alaska has not fallen off the earth or had epidemics of the pot-smoking maladies that prohibitionists claim will happen. I hope all three of the states with measures on the ballot this fall legalize it.

Ben Stearns, San Jose

[illegible] Seven Days 7/25

The Great Excuse

Sure, blame the city's unresolved fiscal problems on the Great Recession. Should be called the Great Excuse.

But more accurately, blame them on the last decade of decisions of the city council expanding its expenditures and future obligations based on the assumption that first the dot-com and then the real-estate bubbles supercharged tax revenues would keep on increasing forever at the same rate of growth. Those bubbles hid the city's stupid fiscal decisions.

I can understand them making that mistake once during the dot-com bubble, but to make it again during the real-estate bubble was just negligent because there have been frequent booms and busts in Oakland real estate over the past one hundred years.

Particularly negligent was continuing to promise lifetime post-retirement medical benefits to everyone and their dependents. Not a penny was set aside to fund that. So can't blame that on any bubble.

Oakland chose the Porsche option for CALPERS, probably costing us hundreds more millions. In 2003, we chose to retroactively increase every currently active employee's pension by 34 percent.

Lastly, we made the decision to pay the highest salaries for any US city for most of the decade.

As for the cop layoffs, instead of the council getting the charter amended to eliminate binding arbitration for cops and fire, which would have give the city much more leverage in salary talks, the city merely laid off eighty cops. Then in later negotiations, instead of setting up a true two-tier pay system, it negotiated a token second tier where the only big change was an age 55 retirement instead of 50 for new hires. But that was watered down by removing caps on vesting.

The 9 percent pension contribution — about which politicians boasted what tough negotiators they were — was partially deferred and then fully offset by deferred salary raises.

Bottom line: if city officials gave a $g about increasing the number of cops, they would a) work to amend the charter to remove binding arbitration; b) negotiate lower salaries/retirement benefits for all employees; and c) immediately negotiate substantive two-tier compensation for all city positions, especially police and fire so we can afford to hire more cops and not do these rolling brownouts of fire stations.

But first they would do the real and long-term fiscal planning transparently so we know accurately what the money situation will be in a year, three years, five years, and ten. They have to be realistic about tax revenues instead of optimistic.

Len Raphael, Oakland City Council candidate

[illegible]

More Harm Than Good

Kudos to Rachel Swan for her excellent piece revealing the stupidity and waste involved in enforcing the Americans with Disabilities Act. Like all misguided attempts to legislate virtue, it does more harm than good, bankrupting honest small businesses and lining the pockets of scumbag attorneys. ADA is also another example of federal encroachment of states' powers (Tenth Amendment), ironically with the intent of preserving the rights of the disabled. I'm not insensitive to the fact that relying on a wheelchair is a tough way to get around. Nevertheless, this is a matter better left to local communities to resolve, as I am not aware of a federal right to frequent a private establishment.

ADA is much like our own Prop 65, the asinine initiative requiring signs warning of chemicals known to cause cancer. Does anyone really not buy gas when seeing one of these at the pump? Of course not. The only result has been great opportunity for scumbag attorneys to sue non-compliant businesses. Until "progressives" wake up and realize that more bureaucracy is not a solution, our Golden State will continue to lose her luster and America will continue her decline.

James Smith, Walnut Creek

[illegible]

An Exit Strategy for the OPD

The Oakland Police Department seems to be on a downward spiral, with no exit strategy, in its efforts to comply with the terms of the Negotiated Settlement Agreement (NSA) in the *Delphine Allen vs. City of Oakland* lawsuit. This is the case that is commonly referred to as the "Riders Case." In that case, Oakland Police Officers were accused of "deliberately being indifferent to, or otherwise ratifying or encouraging, an ongoing practice of misconduct which violated the civil rights of the plaintiffs in that case."

The first paragraph of the NSA states, "The overall objective of this document is to provide for the expeditious implementation, initially with the oversight of an outside monitoring body (hereinafter "the Monitor") of the best available practices and procedures for police management in the areas of supervision, training, and accountability mechanisms, and to enhance the ability of the Oakland Police Department (hereinafter "the Department" or "OPD") to protect the lives, rights, dignity and property of the community it serves."

Nine-plus years after signing the agreement, and now on the verge of receivership, the department seems light-years away from expeditiously completing the tasks of the NSA. How can this be when the stated purpose of the agreement is merely the implementation of best practices in policing? What went wrong — and more importantly, what is our exit strategy to fully comply with the objectives of the NSA?

I think the answer lies in a process we started but never finished. In 1998, the Oakland Police Department started the process for accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). The purpose of CALEA's accreditation programs is to improve the delivery of public safety services, primarily by: maintaining a body of standards, developed by public safety practitioners, covering a wide range of up-to-date public safety initiatives; establishing and administering an accreditation process; and recognizing professional excellence.

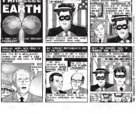
The language in the NSA and CALEA's Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies are almost identical. Most of the top-rated law enforcement agencies in the country have been accredited through the CALEA process. A number of agencies that were formerly under consent decrees/negotiated settlement agreements have used the CALEA accreditation process as a way to remove themselves from these agreements and to bring their departments in compliance with vetted best practices. Local law enforcement agencies that have been accredited by CALEA include the Alameda County Sheriff's Department, California Highway Patrol, Oakland Housing Authority Police Department, and Hayward Police Department. The East Palo Alto Police Department is currently focused on achieving accreditation.

The stakes are far too high. OPD needs to finish what it started in 1998, and complete the CALEA accreditation process as a means to once and for all achieve compliance with the Negotiated Settlement Agreement, and most importantly, to ensure that it is providing the residents of Oakland with the best practices and procedures in policing.

Desley Brooks, Oakland City Council, District 6

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



RAISING THE BAR

THE ONE PERCENT DOUBLES DOWN WITH PAUL RYAN

The rich aim to impose their "American Gospel of Wealth" on us this election

By Jay Youngdahl

Paul Ryan

Mitt Romney's choice of Wisconsin Congressman Paul Ryan as his vice-presidential running mate makes clear that members of the elite believe this is their time to change our country once and for all. Ryan is the ideological standard bearer for the decimation of American social programs and the idea that all power and government largesse should favor the elite. His selection was greeted ecstatically by the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, the journalistic voice of the nation's super-rich. The *Journal's* owner, Rupert Murdoch, who also owns Fox News and who presided over this generation's rightward turn in the United Kingdom, labeled the choice of Ryan as "almost perfect."

Romney-Ryan ticket represents a 180-degree turn in the narrative of America. We are not a country that has progressed together, the Republican candidates argue; we have done it individually. As Adam Gopnik notes in the current edition of *The New Yorker*, Mitt Romney believes "with shining certainty in his own success and, more broadly, in the American Gospel of Wealth that lies behind it — the idea that rich people got rich by being good, that riches are a sign of virtue, and that they should therefore be allowed to rule." Romney's choice of Ryan shows they are serious about imposing this idea on all Americans.

Having succeeded in blocking much legislation in Washington (and in Sacramento for that matter), members of the elite feel that the coast is clear for them to eliminate all programs that do not directly support their money-making ways. In a sense, the choice of Ryan may be an example of Naomi Klein's "shock doctrine." This is the idea that the elite have perfected the art of turning crises into opportunities for them. Post financial crash, America is certainly in crisis, and voters know it. While overall things are better in the Bay Area and a few other fortunate spots, much of the country is slowly sinking into austerity and poverty for the majority. Services that the non-wealthy rely on, such as parks, schools, and libraries, are being starved. Middle-class Americans who work in public service are being demonized while their pensions and benefits are being taken from them. And much more pain is to come.

However, members of the elite still face obstacles in their quest for a complete redefinition of the American Dream. And their choice of Ryan means they think they finally have their chance to eliminate those obstacles.

This November is likely to be forever known as the *Citizens United* election. A growing backlash to this decision may change things in the future, but the One Percent wants to get while the getting is good. They control the Supreme Court, and if they can get the White House along with the Congress, they have the chance to change this country for decades to come. Combined with dirty tricks like voter suppression, the ability to spend lavish amounts on advertising will allow Romney and his Super PACs to create a fog that will be difficult to cut through. Their money will make it seem to many that Ryan's plans, which savagely cut health care for the elderly, is doing the opposite.

Like a successful football coach, the elite knows that when you have an opponent down, you have to crush them. You don't want them to get back up.

What is so amazing about all this is that President Obama has really, really been good for the elite, who have seen their wealth swell during his administration. The president has filled his administration with Goldman Sachs types and refused to go after Wall Street crimes. And it is hard to argue that Obama has fulfilled his 2008 election promise of "change we can believe in." Overseas, he has continued most of the wars of his predecessor, even ordering deaths of American citizens abroad. His domestic policies have disappointed those concerned about environmental, consumer, and labor issues. And many in the East Bay are shocked at the ramped-up assault on medical marijuana. But this is not enough for the elite. Obama has not been willing to make wholesale structural changes, and he does seem to care about health care for Americans, even if the way he is getting there is by expanding the "public-private" partnership of governmental officials and health care corporations.

Even knowing that American electoral politics is a viciously imperfect game, all this makes it tough for the many who have been disgusted by Obama's broken promises and the loving bear hug that the Democratic Party has given to the corporate elite. Many folks had planned to sit this one out, but Ryan changes the calculus.

With Scalia and his gang running the Supreme Court and Boehner and his pals in Congress, having Mitt "Gordon Gekko" Romney and Paul "Ayn Rand" Ryan in the White House would be simply too much. The elite have to be stopped in November. ●

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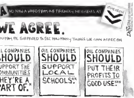
SEVEN DAYS

CHEVRON IS THE PROBLEM

The East Bay oil giant rakes in huge profits and demands that the rest of us pay a steep price. Plus, state health officials warn not to eat oysters from a company backed by DiFi.

By Robert Gammon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YOU MAY BE SURPRISED TO SEE HOW MANY THINGS WE CAN AGREE ON
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* WELL, NOT REALLY
** IN THEORY
*** NOT INCLUDING BASIC MAINTENANCE
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Chevron Corporation reaped $26.9 billion in profits last year. That's right: $26.9 billion. Yet for reasons still to be explained, the San Ramon-based company declined to spend any of that cash on replacing a small, aging section of pipe at its Richmond refinery during an inspection last fall. Last week, that eight-inch pipe began to leak oil profusely before igniting a fireball that could be seen throughout the Bay Area and unleashing a giant plume of smoke that sickened hundreds of nearby residents.

But Chevron's greed, and its accompanying cavalier attitude toward environmental health, is not relegated to ignoring old leaky pipes. For years, the oil giant has been trying to stiff East Bay taxpayers. The company has repeatedly filed claims with Contra Costa County officials contending that tax assessors had overvalued its Richmond property, and that, as a result, its local property tax bill should be much smaller.

In 2009, Chevron won one such claim — thanks in part to a county appeals board member who did not disclose that he also had financial ties to the oil company (see "A Friend of Chevron Gives It a Costly Gift," 10/9/2009). That appeals board decision forced Contra Costa County to pay Chevron a $12.5 million refund, and resulted in county officials having to drastically cut public services even more than they already had done.

Yet even with that windfall, Chevron was unsatisfied. So the company pressed forward with demands for more multimillion-dollar refunds. However, the appeals board, thanks to new members who have no ties to Chevron, ruled against the oil giant earlier this year. Chevron, however, has yet to pay all the taxes it owes.

As such, Chevron exemplifies what is wrong with modern America. Most of us must pay our taxes, and thus do our fair share for the public good, while large corporations and wealthy individuals don't have to. For them, all that matters is accumulating more riches — even if it comes at the expense of the environment and public health.

It should also come as no surprise, then, that Chevron may not suffer much financially from last week's massive fire and explosion. Gas prices immediately spiked after the incident because of a "fuel shortage" caused by the shutdown of the Richmond refinery. In other words, even when Chevron loses, it still wins.

Air Pollution Misunderstood

Bay Area news reporters have generally done a good job so far covering the Chevron explosion and the reasons for it. But as noted by the nonprofit Environmental Health News earlier this week, some news outlets, including the *San Francisco Chronicle*, have given short shrift to the damaging effects to human health posed by particulate matter from smoke.

The massive plume from the Chevron explosion last week strongly suggested the presence of particulate matter and may explain why so many people sought medical care in the hours and days after the incident. Research shows "there is strong epidemiological evidence from around the world" that exposure to particulate matter — such as that produced by the smoke from the fire — "has been associated with respiratory problems that include asthma attacks, coughing, chronic bronchitis, and shortness of breath," Environmental Health News reported. Research also has revealed that the number of heart attacks often increase when particulate levels rise. Moreover, health problems from particulate matter can result in hospitalizations and emergency room visits, and even lead to premature death.

Bad Oysters

Remember that oyster farm we've been writing about — the one US Senator Dianne Feinstein has been backing so strongly? Well, late last week the California Department of Public Health issued a bulletin, warning consumers not to eat oysters from that farm — Drakes Bay Oyster Company — because they may contain bacteria that cause serious illness.

Drakes Bay Oyster Company has been locked in a nasty dispute with the National Park Service over its oyster farm at Point Reyes National Seashore. Feinstein wants the federal government to extend the oyster farm's lease at Drakes Estero in Point Reyes — a move that would be unprecedented because Drakes Estero has been designated by Congress to become the first marine wilderness on the West Coast (see "Feinstein's Folly," 6/13).

In an August 10 statement, California health officials said that oysters from Drakes Bay Oyster Company had sickened at least three people. The oysters contained the bacterium *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*. "Symptoms of *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* infection include vomiting, abdominal cramps, watery diarrhea, headache, fever, and chills," the statement read. "Most infected people recover without treatment in a few days. Severe illness and death from *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* infection is rare, but can occur with chronic liver disease, cancer, or other conditions that weaken the immune system."

Drakes Bay Oyster Company, the largest supplier of oysters in California, has already initiated a voluntary recall of shucked and in-shell raw oysters. "The shucked oysters are packaged under the Drakes Bay Oyster Farm label and sold in 9 ounce, 1 pint, 1 quart and half-gallon jars, or tubs," the health department stated. "The affected shucked products are labeled with lot numbers 363 through 421. The lot number can be found on the top label of each jar or tub. The in-shell raw oysters are sold individually or in bags ranging in size from 1 dozen to 10 dozen. In-shell raw oyster tags are marked with harvest dates ranging from July 17, 2012 through August 8, 2012."

The state health department posted a complete list of the suspect oysters from Drakes Bay on its website. Health officials also recommended that consumers experiencing any ill effects after eating the oysters should consult their health care providers. Also, people who notice Drakes Bay Oyster Company oysters being offered for sale should call the California Department of Public Health at 800-495-3232.

The health department bulletin and the recall could deliver a debilitating blow to Drakes Bay Oyster Company, which has been under fire from environmentalists for repeatedly violating state environmental laws at its Point Reyes oyster farm. At the same time, the business, with Feinstein's help, is attempting to convince US Interior Secretary Ken Salazar to set aside precedent, block creation of the marine wilderness, and extend its lease for another ten years before it expires this November. ●

Seven Days is culled from our news blog, 52510.

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LEGALIZATION NATION

MR. SPLIFF GOES TO WASHINGTON

Activists slog through a Kafka-esque bureaucratic nightmare to reclassify pot as a non-dangerous drug.

By David Downs

The Obama administration has floated trial balloons in the media recently indicating that the president will scale back the Drug War in his second term. But with a federal pot crackdown knocking in doors in the East Bay and throughout the nation, those who believe marijuana has medical value aren't waiting for another four more years of potential presidential duplicity.

On October 16, the US Court of Appeals in Washington, DC, is scheduled to hear oral arguments in a forty-year-long battle to end cannabis' placement in Schedule One of the five-tiered Controlled Substances Act system for classifying drugs. Americans for Safe Access, representing a handful of patient plaintiffs, hopes to get the DC circuit court to compel the Drug Enforcement Administration to reschedule pot to a less restrictive category — an idea the DEA has rejected twice since weed was provisionally placed in Schedule One by Congress in 1970. Under federal law, Schedule One drugs have "no currently accepted medical use" and "high potential for abuse," and include heroin, ecstasy, LSD, and mescaline.

However, cannabis has proven medical uses and a low potential for abuse, wrote Americans for Safe Access attorney Joe Elford in the appeal. Hundreds of modern medical studies testify to its medical efficacy and safety for treating cancer pain, nausea from chemotherapy, and spasticity from muscular sclerosis, among other serious medical problems.

When Congress placed "marihuana" in Schedule One in 1970 as part of the new Controlled Substances Act, it did so pending the review of a Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse. That independent commission recommended cannabis be decriminalized. But then-President Richard Nixon disregarded the commission's work and kept pot in Schedule One.

Weed can now only be removed from Schedule One by Congress, the president, or the attorney general — who has delegated that power to the DEA. Citizens can also petition the DEA to reschedule a drug, and citizens promptly did in 1972 — to comical effect.

That first DEA petition process lasted for an absurd 22 years. The DEA's rejection of the petition was reviewed on appeal by the DC circuit court five times, and the court has sometimes forced the DEA to confront the issue.

In 1988, the DEA's own administrative law judge in the case, Francis Young, recommended reclassifying marijuana. But the DEA rejected its own judge's recommendation, and denied the petition anyway.

In 1995, a new petition was started. The DEA took six years to deny that one, but the circuit court declined to review the appeal.

In 2002, a group called the Coalition for Rescheduling Cannabis filed a third petition, which the DEA denied in 2011. That sounds bad, but the DEA's unreasonable delay and denial opened the door to a circuit court appeal, Elford said. The circuit court, as a result, could compel the DEA to hold another rescheduling petition hearing.

Americans for Safe Access thinks this third petition can do better than the first or second ones because more scientific research exists on medical marijuana than ever before. Mainstream researchers like UC San Diego psychiatrist Igor Grant are joining a growing chorus of medical voices saying that pot's placement in Schedule One is "untenable."

The DEA is also violating its own rules in leaving pot in Schedule One, the appeal states. The DEA uses an absurdly high double-standard for pot scheduling compared to any other drug. Most drugs need medical experts to testify to a drug's efficacy before approval for use, but pot must first unite the world in a "scientific consensus" before it's reclassified. The DEA then prevents scientists from approaching such a consensus by withholding the only medically valid supplies of weed in the United States from researchers who would study its medical efficacy.

Oral arguments in the case will occur just weeks before the presidential election, creating another prime opportunity to educate voters on the hypocrisy that perpetuates federal marijuana policy, said ASA spokesman Kris Hermes. "I think the decades of attempts to reschedule a substance that the DEA itself has found to be medically active and not a danger to public health or a danger to patients is clearly a political issue," Hermes said. "It's Kafka-esque in the most excessive way."

The case could take years, but if the plaintiffs can compel the DEA to reschedule pot, it'll kick off a domino effect, leading to more marijuana research, more medical marijuana legalization, new medical marijuana defenses in federal court, and an eventual end to the weed war, said Hermes. "That very important ripple effect will knock the wind out of the sails of the federal government's crackdown in California and other states around this issue," he said. "The ability to conduct raids and intimidate property owners and public officials will become significantly hindered by a ruling that would reclassify marijuana."

There's nothing to stop the DEA from holding another petition hearing and again ignoring the recommendations of its own judges, Hermes added. But the third denial would be a net gain for the marijuana law reform movement, he said. Such spectacles feed the ever-more-credible theory that pharmaceutical companies control Washington DC, the FDA, and the DEA. "The ability for the federal government to continue politicizing this issue and denying the medical evidence is going to become more and more difficult as the months and years progress," he said. "Really, this case will further open up the door for people to know the politicized nature of how marijuana is classified." ●

David.Downs@gmail.com

This column is culled from our blog of the same name.

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ECO WATCH

ULTRA-SAFE BIKE PARKING GAINS POPULARITY

Electronic lockers made by Berkeley-based BikeLink are now available at nearly all BART stations in the East Bay

By Nate Seltenrich

On a recent Thursday afternoon at peak commute hour, bicycles rolled out of BART's MacArthur station at a rapid clip. Many were retrieved from rows of outdoor racks: a jumble of road bikes and mountain bikes and cruisers and hybrids. Others came from behind the gates, where bike parking in standard U-racks is slightly safer and in even higher demand.

Yet in the half-hour between 5:00 and 5:30, not a single bicycle went into or out of the station's ultra-secure electronic storage lockers. That's because the lockers offer a total of only forty individual spaces — twelve of which happened to be vacant — and they serve a somewhat rarefied clientele. A quick study of the lockers' contents through their steel-mesh sides and front gates revealed newer and high-end Cannondale, Schwinn, Specialized, and Bianchi bikes, plus a souped-up fixie or two.

Their owners pay three to five cents an hour to Berkeley company BikeLink, designer and manufacturer of the electronic storage lockers, for the privilege of staying theft- and scratch-free during the workday. And while the number of locker users may not compare with those willing to stash their bikes outside at no cost, they represent an important contingent of commuters at East Bay BART stations.

Since the first BikeLink lockers went in at El Cerrito Plaza ten years ago, the transit agency has used grant funds to install more than 800 of the 2,900 units throughout the system, including at 29 of the East Bay's 30 stations — with the last one, Walnut Creek, due next year. The electronic lockers, each just large enough to accommodate a single bike, can be accessed via a small debit card available for purchase on BikeLink's website.

BikeLink also manufactures group lockers equipped with similar digital readers, which are currently installed at the Berkeley Bike Station in downtown Berkeley (room for 268 bikes), the Ashby Bike Station (128), and the Embarcadero Bike Station in San Francisco (96). Although these don't operate at capacity — Embarcadero sees about 60 users a day, Ashby 55, and downtown Berkeley 45 — more group lockers are bound for new bike stations at the 19th Street and MacArthur stops in Oakland and at San Francisco's Civic Center. Only BikeLink customers can enter the group lockers, but bikes still must be locked up inside to be secure. BART anticipates demand for secure bicycle parking to steadily increase in coming years, and group storage offers a higher-density solution than individual lockers.

"One of the big, long-term challenges for BART as our ridership continues to grow is getting people to our stations," said bicycle program manager Steve Beroldo — and that includes bicyclists of all stripes, whether their gear costs tens or thousands of dollars. "We want people to feel comfortable and confident about using them." Theft from BikeLink lockers is rare — only a couple incidents have occurred over the last two years throughout the BART system, Beroldo said.

Yet BART is far from BikeLink's only customer. The ten-year-old, sixteen-employee company, which assembles its lockers and electronic readers by hand in a rambling 6,000-square-foot warehouse complex located a few blocks from its modest West Berkeley headquarters, produced between five hundred and six hundred lockers over the last twelve months, said founder and president Steven Grover. Its lockers have landed at transit stops in cities from Portland to San Diego on the West Coast and just outside Washington, DC on the East Coast. The City of New York has shown interest, too.

BikeLink has grown at a modest pace to date, Grover said, but that's about to change. Within the next few years, the company could expand its customer base well beyond the current 10,000 registered users by doubling, then tripling its production figures. "We can probably produce ten times as many as we did last year without running into problems with capacity," Grover said.

Some day it just might. Based on word-of-mouth — the company doesn't advertise yet — BikeLink has received inquiries from South America and throughout Europe. Now that Grover is happy with the locker design — they're in their fifth iteration, and designed to last forty years — the company is ready to start moving units. "Our products have reached a level of maturity where we're really ready to respond to that," he said. International expansion begins in Toronto, Canada and Newcastle, United Kingdom, within the next twelve months. Before long, it could be Croatia and Scandinavia. "They're calling because they see a need for secure bike parking and not just racks. Typically this is going to be associated with transit, where people are relying on them for their daily transportation, where reliability is critical."

BikeLink certainly isn't the world's only producer of electronic bicycle lockers; competitors include Cycle Safe, based in Michigan, and Southern California's Creative Pipe Inc. and American Bicycle Security Company. But its success to date and positive outlook are indicative of a broader trend toward secure parking designed to entice a certain class of bicycle commuters.

As the scene at the MacArthur station shows, many bicyclists will settle for free parking at U-racks. But some won't — including novice commuters and recreational riders on brand-new bikes who are hyper-concerned about theft. Perhaps that's why in Pleasant Hill, where bicycle commuting is less entrenched and fewer used bikes are available, BART offers 104 BikeLink lockers, more than double the number at the next-largest station.

"When we survey people, one of the main deterrents is worrying about your bike being stolen," said Renee Rivera of the East Bay Bicycle Coalition. "It's one of the least sexy biking topics, but it's incredibly important." ●

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FULL DISCLOSURE

WHAT TRANSPARENCY?

Oakland is spending $102,000 over the next three years on an online campaign finance system that few candidates and political committees are using.

By Robert Gammon

Politicians often say they support government transparency. Reality, however, is sometimes a different story. Oakland city councilmembers, for example, voted last month to spend $102,000 over the next three years on a software system that gives voters access to campaign finance documents online. The idea was to allow residents to see who is funding political candidates without having to trek down to City Hall. However, as of early this week, only a few politicians and independent groups were actually using the new system, raising questions as to whether the $102,000 in taxpayer money is being well spent.

The main problem with the new system, which is made and run by NetFile, a Mariposa, California company, is that the council failed to make it mandatory. Politicians and independent groups, as a result, only have to file their campaign statements electronically if they want to. And so far, most of them apparently don't want to. "Very few people are using it," noted Tamika Thomas, assistant city clerk in charge of election monitoring.

In fact, of the eight sitting councilmembers, Larry Reid was the only one who filed electronically during the most recent reporting period — which came after the council decided to spend $102,000 on the new system, according to a review of the city's website earlier this week. And the only candidates running for election this fall who filed electronically were Dan Kalb, who is running for the North Oakland seat; Derrick Muhammad, who is vying for the West Oakland/Downtown council seat; James Harris, who is running for Oakland school board; and school board member Jumoke Hinton Hodge, who is seeking reelection. Neither of the city attorney candidates — City Attorney Barbara Parker and Councilwoman Jane Brunner — filed electronically.

"You're paying for the system without requiring people to use it," noted Oliver Luby, an open-government advocate who used to work for the San Francisco Public Ethics Commission. "It's very curious it was done that way." In San Francisco, which uses the same system that Oakland purchased, electronic filing is mandatory for most candidates and political committees.

Oakland's voluntary system, meanwhile, also undermines the other main justifications for buying the new software. In a June 25 memo to the council, the City Clerk's Office recommended signing the NetFile contract because it would supposedly "eliminate the submission of excessive paper reports," and make it easier for city clerk staffers.

But so far, it's done neither. When the council voted on July 17 to sign the contract, it did not change city rules that require candidates and independent committees to file paper copies of their campaign statements. As a result, they're all still doing it — even the candidates and committees that filed the same information electronically. In addition, city clerk staffers must now scan the paper copies of the reports filed by candidates and committees that did not file electronically in order to post them on the city's website. In short, the NetFile system, because it's not mandatory, has created more work for city clerk staffers — not less.

The one positive thing about the new system is that after city clerk staffers scan the paper copies and post them on the website, voters can look at the PDF documents online. That's definitely an improvement over the old system of having to go down to City Hall. But because the scanned copies are PDFs, Oakland's system is still inferior to that of San Francisco and other agencies that require electronic filings.

In San Francisco, computer users can download campaign statements into Excel spreadsheets, which makes them easier to analyze and determine which donors are giving the most money in an election cycle and which candidates they're supporting. Unlike PDFs, spreadsheets also make it much easier to track whether donors and candidates are engaging in pay-to-play politics. That's because spreadsheets can be arranged in varying formats and compared to other databases, such as one listing government contractors.

But because Oakland's system is voluntary, voters can only analyze donor information from the candidates and groups that filed electronically. As a result, you can download Reid's latest filing into a spreadsheet, but not any other councilmember's. (It should be noted, however, that Oakland's online system is not that user-friendly. In fact, finding Reid's downloadable information is not easy.)

So why aren't more Oakland councilmembers, candidates, and independent groups embracing transparency? "That's a good question," said Councilwoman Libby Schaaf, who is generally regarded as an open-government advocate, yet as of Monday, had not yet filed electronically. And why didn't the council vote to make the new system mandatory? "That's also a good question," Schaaf said.

Full Disclosure uncovered no evidence that councilmembers purposely chose to make the system voluntary so that they wouldn't have to use it. Instead, it appears that the council just failed to realize that the NetFile system is not worth $102,000 over three years unless it's mandatory for candidates and independent groups. The council actually launched a trial run of the system last year. And at that time, it didn't make sense to make it mandatory — since it was just a trial. But then when the council approved the NetFile contract, it neglected to make electronic filing mandatory.

But the council should do so when it returns from its August recess. This coming election is an important one in Oakland, with five council and four school board seats up for grabs. The new system also is not burdensome. According to Kenneth Linney, treasurer for candidate Kalb, the NetFile software is simple to use.

Finally, it should be noted that three independent committees have filed electronically: the East Bay Rental Housing Association, which represents landlords; Oakland Jobs PAC, which represents large businesses; and OakPAC, the political arm of the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. ●

Robert.Gammon@EastBayExpress.com

REPAIR ACION BICYLE

The bike shop also provides a safe space for the community

Jen Chen

NEWS

BILINGUAL BIKE REPAIR IN FRUITVALE

At ColectiVelo, low-income cyclists can fix their bikes for free — and build community in the process.

By Jen Chen

Bike culture in the Bay Area runs the gamut from high-performance racing bikes to hipster fixies. Keeping a bike can be an expensive hobby and, as with cars, some people use their bikes as an extension of their personal style.

At ColectiVelo, a community bike shop in East Oakland, bicycles are still valued for their primary purpose: transportation. The shop provides free space and tools, bike repair training in Spanish and English, and access to bicycles for those with low incomes.

On a recent afternoon, Juana Paredes adjusted the gears on a kid-size bike mounted on a stand. Her hands were streaked with black grease, and her head tilted to the side as she stood back to watch the wheel turn, testing the adjustment.

She said she has worked at ColectiVelo for about five Saturdays: cleaning, opening, and closing the shop. That's how she earned her first bike.

Paredes' work-exchange experience is not an exception here — it's the norm because ColectiVelo operates without the use of money. The shop offers the use of its bike-repair tools, equipment, and space free of charge, but in order to take bikes or parts home, people are asked to volunteer their time and skills to benefit the shop.

The idea for the shop was conceived five years ago, when a public health nurse and her social worker colleagues saw a need for affordable, efficient transportation among the day laborers they served in Fruitvale. They dreamed of a bike shop for them and for the other low-income residents of the neighborhood. They found a space to launch this dream at the Oakland Catholic Worker, a resource center that mainly serves the large Latino community in Fruitvale. One of its services is providing transitional housing for recent immigrants at its house on International Boulevard. Juana Paredes lived there when she moved to the United States from Mexico, and that is how she found out about ColectiVelo.

Bikes of every shape and purpose line the walls and ceiling of the semi-open space. Heavy metal shelving holds bike tools and plastic bins of spare parts. There's a friendly, organized, junkyard vibe to the place.

Kathleen Mills is also here doing work exchange for a neat little folding bike she is fixing up for her granddaughter. She found ColectiVelo through the Catholic Worker house's hot meal program. "They gave me some beans and rice, and then I was talking to them, asking did they have job research and stuff like that," she said. "But then they're like, 'no, but we fix bikes!' I'm like, 'oh, great!' So I came around and I started working."

Mills said she discovered her interest for bicycles at ColectiVelo. "I never knew about bikes," she said. "I'm like almost sixty years old. So, never too old to learn something."

She has been coming to the shop for five weeks and has now brought her nephew, Steven Hobdy, into the fold. He is converting an old ten-speed bike into a faster, more efficient single-speed. "I wanted to make something more comfortable and make me look good on the street, too," he laughed.

ColectiVelo doesn't just provide a place to learn about bikes, it also offers a safe space for the community. Juana Paredes has gone there every Saturday for the past year. She said it feels like home, a definite contrast to how she feels outside on the streets because of the violence, drug use, and muggings that take place.

On that particular afternoon, a shooting occurred at the car wash next to the shop, a serious reminder that safe spaces are a real need in this neighborhood. ColectiVelo's main organizer, Morgan Kanninen, said the shared activity of bike repair helps build relationships in the neighborhood that otherwise wouldn't exist. "It creates a space where people ... feel like they belong," she said.

Native Spanish and English speakers often work side-by-side, and all signage in the shop is in both languages. Kanninen says the bilingual element makes ColectiVelo special. "They're super friendly to each other and everybody adds to the ambience, even if they can't necessarily communicate directly with words," she said.

Kanninen believes the no-cash model of the shop's operations also strengthens the feeling of community. When people want a bike or parts, the first step is sitting down to a meeting to discuss possible work-exchange scenarios. There are some set volunteer tasks, like helping to open and close the shop on Saturdays, but it is up to each person to propose what he or she can do to help the shop. Kanninen said volunteers have built awnings to protect the bikes from rain, constructed tables, painted signs, re-organized the shelves, and even created bicycle art to be hung in the shop.

All of the work takes place within the shop on Saturdays, when everyone is there. Kanninen said this is helpful because people can actually see each other doing the work, and it creates more of a communal atmosphere. "It's kind of inspiring to see people's different ideas happen," she said. "I think it creates a lot more appreciation for each other."

One of the reasons that ColectiVelo can afford to operate in this communal way is that, unlike other retail bike shops, it has very low expenses. The Oakland Catholic Worker owns its house, and charges no rent to the bike shop. Almost every item in the shop was donated or made by volunteers.

Kanninen said that she occasionally receives cash donations, and sometimes people offer money instead of labor for bikes or parts. While she said she appreciates the offers, the shop's eschewing of money is very purposeful. She pointed out that even sliding-scale systems can contribute to a feeling of inequality among participants. "Someone asking to pay at the lower end of a sliding scale can create a sense of alienation or shame that just does not need to be involved in this bike shop," she said. "I think it would only hurt the growth of community here and the real sharing and learning from each other."

Near closing time, Kathleen Mills started cleaning and putting away the tools, while her nephew Stephen Hobdy put the finishing touches on his ten-speed to single-speed conversion. The conversion has been pretty trendy amongst hipsters, and although Hobdy admitted he does want to look good on his bike, he said he's mostly concerned with the simple task of getting to and from work. At ColectiVelo, people are getting back to bicycle basics: human-powered transportation. And they're doing it with the very human power of relationships. ●

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The crowd at this month's Art Murmur spilled into the street

NEWS

THE FUTURE OF FIRST FRIDAYS

With Art Murmur's main nexus no longer closed to traffic, questions of safety abound.

By Ellen Cushing

In 2005, when a small group of artists and gallery owners first gathered in a back corner of what was then Mama Buzz, to plan what was then unnamed and unknown, their objective was humble: to find a new, creative way to bring people into their galleries via a monthly community gathering clustered around the nexus of 23rd Street and Telegraph Avenue. By all accounts, they were successful beyond their wildest dreams. In seven years, Art Murmur has gone from a small, scrappy get-together of local artists and enthusiasts to a veritable cultural phenomenon, acting as a model for similar events in other cities, attracting attention from national media outlets and bringing an estimated 5,000 to 10,000 people to downtown Oakland every month of the year.

But with that success came a new, unprecedented set of concerns, and at some point, the event's original organizers found themselves responsible for something much bigger than they'd signed up for. "Art Murmur is not a traffic enforcement agency or a parking enforcement agency," said Marshall Lamm, current president of Art Murmur's board. "I don't think it's fair to expect art galleries to shut down streets and put up Porta-Pottys and reroute busses." Art Murmur, in short, had become too large and too popular for 23rd and Telegraph. So starting in July, for the first time in its existence, the Art Murmur organization stopped closing down the intersection and allowed the street party to flow completely into downtown.

"What's happened here is that Art Murmur has become, for lack of a better term, a victim of its own success," said Samee Roberts, director of marketing for the City of Oakland. With 23rd no longer closed to traffic, Roberts and her colleagues at City Hall — as well as neighborhood associations and local businesses — have voiced concerns about safety and security, concerns that challenge the spirit and call into question the future of the event. "People have been attracted to Art Murmur because it's been unregulated and because it's been grassroots," said Roberts. "But our position is that nothing will dampen the spirit faster than somebody getting injured or somebody getting sick."

At the two first Fridays since June, thousands of people filled sidewalks and spilled out into city streets, making themselves vulnerable to traffic accidents and pickpockets; meanwhile, unlicensed food vendors clogged the sidewalks, increasing the possibility of a public-health problem. During this month's Murmur, a brick was thrown through the local Obama campaign headquarters at 18th and Telegraph, allegedly while people were inside; although no one went so far as to suggest that the crime was explicitly connected to Art Murmur, some argued that the general melee facilitated it. Firecrackers have been set off in crowded areas and graffiti has spiked, according to Deputy City Administrator Arturo Sanchez; at one point last month, Telegraph and 23rd became so choked with revelers that an AC Transit bus was trapped in the intersection for several minutes with no safe way out. And though Sanchez said hasn't seen or heard about any injuries yet, it's clear that the worst-case scenario is on everyone's mind. Last summer at a similar art walk in downtown Los Angeles, also without street closures, a two-month-old was hit and killed by a car after its driver lost control of his vehicle amidst the chaos and jumped the curb. The tragedy was enough to spark a major re-evaluation of the event — and to prompt concerns about something similar happening here.

Whether such concerns are ever borne out, everyone appears to agree that the stakes are high. Art Murmur has, of course, been a boon for galleries, artists, and the vendors that previously lined up along 23rd, but it's also increased Oakland's cultural cachet immeasurably (Roberts described it as "marketing that money can't buy"), and, though no one's undertaken an official analysis of the event's financial impact on the city, local bars, restaurants, and stores report significant upticks in business on the First Friday of every month — which is especially important in a city that's scarcely been known as an arts capital and in a local business climate that continues to struggle. "First Friday is such an awesome event for Oakland," said Sanchez. "And it's in everyone's interest to see it continue on."

That, it appears, is part of the problem. Everyone — artists, galleries, vendors, attendees, city officials, nearby businesses — has a stake in Art Murmur's continued success, but with so many different entities involved, it's hard to tell where control — and culpability — end and begin. "Up until recently Art Murmur was responsible for what happened on 23rd Street [between Telegraph and Valley], but they're not anymore," said Shari Godinez, executive director of the Koreatown-Northgate business association. "And no one's been really responsible for what's been happening on Telegraph." In other words, in becoming everyone's event, there's a way in which it's become no one's. "Our feeling is that everyone has a stake in the continued success of Art Murmur," said Roberts. "But in this economic climate, there isn't one entity that could pick this up and fund it."

Some have suggested shutting down portions of Telegraph — or, really, making official what the crush of bodies has already made reality — but that poses significant challenges, seeing as Telegraph is a major traffic artery. According to Roberts, others have proposed moving the center of the event to Old Oakland, which is less highly trafficked. But either way, street closures, bus reroutings, a police detail, and various other types of infrastructure all come with significant costs, and until now, they've been managed on an ad-hoc basis: In preparation for August's event, Koreatown-Northgate rented nine Porta-Pottys, bought several trash cans, and hired private security guards, at a significant expense — one that Godinez doubts will be financially sustainable in the future. According to Roberts, the city has looked into finding corporate sponsorship for the event, but then there are concerns about modifying Art Murmur's original grassroots mission. As of press time, the city, various business organizations, and other interests had held a number of meetings, but no one's come to a concrete solution about what to do moving forward — and, meanwhile, Art Murmur will continue as it has for the foreseeable future and hope for the best.

"There is no talk of pulling the plug on First Friday," Lamm said decisively. "But as it continues to get bigger and bigger, it has to be managed in a way to keep it safe and sustainable. There's so much for Oakland to gain here." And, he added, "there's a lot to lose." ●

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BY KATHLEEN RICHARDS

Yutaka Houlette

As an emergency room physician Caesar Djavaherian is naturally concerned with the health of his patients. But that concern he said, is being pursued at the expense of the environment.

Consider the amount of waste that his department generates. "So currently every patient is examined using gloves," he said. "And then if they're vomiting, we have little plastic containers for vomiting which everyone gets. Every patient is put into a bed with new sheets on it — it's all rubbed down with a disposable cloth, like a Clorox wipe.

When we start an IV, insert a catheter there's plastic. We use gowns — thick paper gowns — that are thrown away. All the packaging is plastic, certainly not recyclable. The medications come packaged in plastic. If you're using an IV, the liquid is also in a thicker plastic — two layers of plastic. ... The vast majority of the garbage we generate is paper and plastic."

Add all this up, multiply it by every patient seen every day, and it's a bit mind boggling. "The amount of waste is unreal — it would turn your stomach," said Djavaherian, who works at North Bay Hospital in Fairfield and who's also the chief medical officer of ER Direct, an East Bay company that makes house calls, which the *Express* featured in March. "Every outpatient, every operating room, every one produces, in some cases, a small roomful of waste. ... It all goes into the garbage can. The garbage gets emptied six, seven times a day. I just wish more people were aware of this."

What surprises Djavaherian, who considers himself somewhat of an environmentalist, is that none of the ten hospitals he has worked for in his career have recycled this waste, which means the bulk of it ends up in the landfill. The question is why?

While various federal and state laws and regulations prevent certain waste and patient records from being thrown into the recycling bin, Djavaherian believes there is plenty of material that could theoretically be recycled, reused or swapped out for nondisposable items. And the effect could be enormous. Although reliable statistics on hospital waste in the United States are hard to come by, Practice Greenhealth — a nonprofit organization based in Reston, Virginia, that promotes sustainability in the health care industry — estimates that US hospitals produce more than 5.9 million tons of waste annually (or 33 pounds per staffed bed per day). But that number is based on data from its members, which have already reduced their waste streams. In other words, the actual amount of waste is likely much higher.

What is clear is that most of the plastic generated by the health care industry is not recycled. This is especially problematic given that the use of plastic has grown dramatically over the years, as medical suppliers have increasingly moved toward disposable items and packaging them in kits, in which one item may be used for a procedure and the rest are thrown away. Although some hospitals, like Kaiser, have begun setting aside these unused items and shipping them overseas, a recent article by the industry news site PlasticsToday.com noted that "American hospitals generate more than 400,000 tons of plastic and other packaging waste every year, and the percentage recycled is close to zero." Despite efforts to reduce medical waste in this country, overall the opposite has been true — the amount of waste generated has only increased. And so have the costs of disposing of it.

Many hospitals have begun to look at ways to reduce their energy consumption and waste output — mainly because of the huge costs associated with these factors — such as composting food, reducing water use, and recycling computers. But, in general, hospitals still lag behind the rest of society in terms of their recycling.

So why don't hospitals recycle more, and why isn't anyone holding them accountable? There are multiple possible explanations. Recycling isn't as easy as just throwing any plastic in a recycling bin; not all of the plastic

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Kathleen Richards

Until recently, sharps containers were thrown away, according to Mike Gastellum of Barnett Medical Services.

use is recyclable, according to the Healthcare Plastics Recycling Council, and oftentimes items contain multiple kinds of material, which complicates their recyclability. There's also the issue of perceived costs — after all, hospitals would need to buy extra containers, hire more workers to sort the trash, and train its staff. And a wrong item thrown in the wrong bin could lead to fines in the tens of thousands of dollars.

But ultimately, experts agree, diverting recyclables from the waste stream would save hospitals money. As things stand now, rising medical waste-disposal costs aren't just burdening hospitals, they're burdening patients too.

Hospitals are essentially hotels, so they produce a fair amount of trash. But regulations enacted to reduce infectious disease and environmental pollution appear to have led to an increase in waste.

Until relatively recently, the way we disposed of and treated our medical waste was essentially a "free-for-all." That's according to Mike Gastellum, managing partner and one of the co-owners of Hayward-based Barnett Medical Services, a company that transports and disposes of medical waste and also sells medical supplies to some 1,800 customers.

Back in the day, medical waste on the East Coast was essentially taken out onto barges and dumped into the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. When syringes and other garbage began washing up on beaches, Congress enacted the Medical Waste Tracking Act of 1988, which helped set the standards for government regulation of medical waste. The act expired in 1991, after which time states were given regulatory authority.

Before we go further, it's important to understand the various distinctions in medical waste. For the purposes of this article, "medical waste" and "hospital waste" refer to any waste that a hospital produces. The majority of hospital waste is noninfectious solid waste: It gets picked up by municipal garbage trucks and heads to the landfill. Then there's Regulated Medical Waste, which in California is governed by the Medical Waste Management Act. Regulated Medical Waste, or biohazardous waste, is further broken down into two categories: the first includes sharps and anything thrown into the "red bag" (laboratory waste, human surgery specimens or tissues, and other bodily fluids) and is usually sterilized before heading to the dump, and incineratables, which include pharmaceuticals, trace chemo and pathological waste and, as their name suggests, must be incinerated. Hospitals and clinics usually pay companies to pick up their Regulated Medical Waste, which is much more expensive to treat than solid waste.

Over the years, hospitals and medical supply companies have increasingly turned to disposable plastic items because of concerns over infectious disease. But using all that plastic isn't always necessary, and disposable instruments are not necessarily better or more protective against spreading disease than nondisposable ones are (as long as they are properly sterilized). "Twenty years ago, everything was reusable," said Beth Eckl, the director of the environmental purchasing program for Practice Greenhealth. "Now everything in the OR [operating room] is disposable. Because of infection-control issues, serious ones, we've gone to more disposables. That's an area that can be changed. Many of our hospitals have had success with reusables."

Not only have medical supplies become more disposable, but they're also increasingly packaged in kits. This means that when a kit is opened but only one item is used, the rest is thrown away. In fact, according to the industry news site SurgicalProductsMag.com, 85 percent of the plastic in a hospital's waste stream has never come into contact with a patient.

Djavaherian notes the common tracheotomy procedure — in which an incision is made into a patient's neck to allow him or her to breathe — as an example. "We used to have an ear/nose/throat kit," he said. "It would have equipment to dilate the hole and make it bigger. All that equipment was stainless steel and would be sterilized and reused. Now we have a [disposable] kit. Everything except a small four- to five-inch piece of plastic is thrown away." He estimates the size of the kit to be ten-by-eight-by-four inches. "We just throw all of that in the garbage."

As medical supplies have become more disposable and packaged together — creating more waste — the cost of disposing of and treating medical waste has also increased. One reason for the increase is the fact that commercial medical waste incinerators no longer operate in California.

In 1990, the California Air Resources Board tightened its dioxin standards for medical waste incinerators (which emitted both dioxins and mercury). Meanwhile, there was increasing pressure from the public to close these polluting facilities, even though they were meeting the Air Resources Board's standards, according to Jack McGurk, former chief of the Environmental Management Branch of the California Department of Health Services. In December 2001, the last medical waste incinerator in California — Integrated Environmental Systems, which was based in Oakland — closed.

Environmentalists and many community members hailed the closure as a victory, but this move ultimately led to increased medical waste costs because now all incineratables are trucked out of state. "So now we ship all our expired pharmaceuticals to either South Texas, North Dakota, or Utah," said Gastellum. "Now think about all the tens of thousands of gallons of diesel fuel that is burned up in all the trucks taking the stuff there and all the way back. So where's the tradeoff? Which one is worse? All that diesel fuel being burned up or the incinerator?

"So it's kind of a perplexing situation going on," he continued. "And think of also the incredible expense that's being added ... [it] eventually gets pushed onto the consumers. So when they talk about the cost — everything going up — it's in everything. It's in not only the medicine cost but it's also in stuff like this in disposing."

At the time of Integrated Environmental

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Systems closure, medical waste treatment and hauling cost between 16 and 20 cents per pound according to a 2002 report by McGurk. These days, disposing of regulated medical waste can cost anywhere from 21 to 35 cents a pound said Gastellum (by comparison, solid waste costs between 3 and 5 cents a pound).

Another factor in rising medical waste disposal costs is the fact that hospitals are more wasteful. A study by Johns Hopkins researchers last year found that some 90 percent of operating room waste that ends up in red bags does not actually meet those standards. This could be due to the fact that hospital staff err on the side of caution so as to avoid contamination. But this means hospitals end up paying more to dispose of their medical waste. Hazardous and regulated medical waste — which is much more expensive to dispose of than noninfectious waste — accounts for 80 percent of medical waste costs. It's safe to say these costs are passed on to patients. According to the American Hospital Association, the health care industry spends $10 billion annually to dispose its waste, but could reduce that amount by $4 to $7 billion as the vast majority (85 percent) of a hospital's overall waste is municipal solid waste, 60 percent of which could be recycled or composted.

What this means is that it's often much more costly to dispose of an item than to buy a new one. "The sad part of this industry and some of the scary stories that are involved in it is that some of the waste costs ten times more to get rid of than when the customer — the customer being like a doctor or a dentist — bought it off the shelf," said Gastellum. "They paid $25 or $40 bucks for a gallon of it, then it costs them $90 to get rid of it. So it's staggering — the difference in prices. ... Some of the stuff costs so much to treat it — that's what drives the disposal price."

Pharmaceuticals are one of the medical waste industry's biggest concerns — not only because of the environmental pollution related to their incineration but also because many people still dispose of their unused drugs improperly by throwing them in the garbage or flushing them down the toilet, which pollutes our environment and our water supply. Alameda County had been paying for drug disposal sites but most recently passed a landmark ordinance requiring pharmaceutical companies to shoulder the burden — the first of its kind in the nation. But at this point, it's unclear whether the county can enforce the ordinance, or whether the pharmaceutical industry will sue to stop it.

In light of the huge costs associated with disposing of medical waste, the industry has begun looking at ways to reduce, reuse and recycle in recent years. Most of this has occurred in the front-end of hospital operations, since hospitals are also huge users of resources. "Hospitals are the fourth largest user of energy and one of the largest users of water in the community," said Practice Greenhealth's Eckl.

For many hospitals, energy and water consumption are sort of the low hanging fruit when it comes to waste reduction. Locally, Washington Hospital in Fremont, a member of Practice Greenhealth, has decreased its solid waste from 65 percent of its total waste to 62 percent in the past two years according to spokeswoman Gisela Hernandez. It's also increased its reduce-reuse-recycle rate from 27 to 31 percent in the same time period. The hospital composts its food waste, recycles aluminum cans, accepts unused medication from the community and has decreased its energy and water consumption.

Recycling on the patient care side of hospital operations may be more challenging, but even the slightest reduction in waste can add up to huge savings. For example, Eckl said that Kimberly-Clark Corporation just launched a program to recycle its blue wrap — the plastic that covers all sterilized surgical instruments and is pulled off before a patient even enters the room. According to the CalRecycle Hospital Waste Reduction and Recycling Team, the health care industry estimates that nearly 20 percent of the waste stream is from surgical services, a large percentage of which is clean blue wrap.

A STUDY BY JOHNS HOPKINS RESEARCHERS LAST YEAR FOUND THAT SOME 90 PERCENT OF OPERATING ROOM WASTE THAT ENDS UP IN RED BAGS DOES NOT ACTUALLY MEET THOSE STANDARDS. ... THIS MEANS HOSPITALS END UP PAYING MORE TO DISPOSE OF THEIR MEDICAL WASTE.

Another example of recent improvement: Fluid suction containers have traditionally made up 40 percent of the waste in the ER, said Eckl. Typically they're treated with chemicals and then thrown away. "Now we have reusable canisters," she said. Similarly, containers that hold used sharps have traditionally been thrown away. But now there are reusable sharps containers, said Gastellum.

Hospitals and medical suppliers are increasingly taking initiatives to reduce the amount of plastic they use. But anecdotal evidence suggests these efforts are not yet nearly as widespread as they should be. Erin Ford, who has been a nurse for fifteen years and is currently an RN in the post-anesthesia care unit at California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco, said the majority of the equipment and supplies — except for hazardous waste and sharps, which must be specially disposed of according to law — goes into the trash can. "Most everything goes into regular trash," she said, citing empty IV bags, IV tubing, oxygen face masks, EKG leads, soiled bandages and tissues, plus Bair Paws — huge plastic gowns that patients wear pre-operatively — as examples.

And yet, "anything plastic could probably be put into a [recycling] bin," she said, "everything from nasal cannulas to open saline bottles to humidified oxygen bottles — even the IV bags that are empty — we throw them in the trash. There's nothing on them." What's more, anything that's expired — even if it's unused — must also be thrown away, she said. "We go through all the supply rooms and if anything is outdated we throw it away," she said. Other nurses who work or have worked in other Bay Area hospitals and private doctor's offices interviewed for this story also said recycling didn't exist where they worked and that everything is thrown away.

For hospital staff, throwing everything away isn't mandatory but it appears to be the easier option. Take scalpels, for example, which used to be predominantly stainless steel and sterilized before each use but are now disposable — they've got plastic handles and a tiny stainless steel blade at the end. Anna, a nurse who works at a private surgery clinic in San Francisco and only wanted to go by her first name, said she believes disposable scalpels are more popular because they're cheaper but also because of the lessened risk associated with simply being able to throw the item away after using it. "It's easier to buy cheaper disposable scalpels — cleaning and sterilizing is more of a risk," she said. "That's a risk for someone to get poked."

There's also logistical hurdles to recycling. Ford said one nurse at her hospital wanted to recycle saline bottles, but the effort was scrapped. "There's not a team hired to take away the recycling," said Ford. "Our housekeeping already have their hands full — they're not ready to take on that task." One nurse who did not want to be identified for fear of repercussions said a local private doctor's office she used to work at did not even recycle bottles and cans, and when she tried to institute it — even volunteering to take the bottles and cans home to recycle herself — no one on staff participated and the idea was eventually dropped. "It's just not part of the culture," she said, referring to the non-recycling nature of her peers.

Ultimately, it seems an entire shift in hospital culture is what's needed. "I think they more instill in you about gross contamination and infectious disease than the recycling," said Ford. "That's not really mentioned at all in orientations or upkeep. We have to take mandatory tests online all the time to keep up with OSHA standards, but it's never really based on recycling. It's based on safety concerns of the patient. We need the resources and money, then you can train the staff."

Indeed, money may be the biggest issue of all. Sorting recyclables means adding another job to the work of nurses and doctors, which may represent too much to a hospital's bottom line, said McGurk, who currently runs his own health-care consulting business, Systems Improvement Initiatives Inc. "The hospital's thinking, 'Wait a minute, you're a highly-paid individual. Do we want to take the time to do that?'"

Following the East Coast medical waste washup in the late Eighties, the American Hospital Association and the US Environmental Protection Agency signed an agreement to reduce our country's medical waste — the efforts of which eventually became Practice Greenhealth. Among the Memorandum of Understanding's goals was to reduce overall medical waste by 33 percent in 2005 and 50 percent by 2010 — ambitious targets, to be sure. Though numbers of how much waste that actually represented were not mentioned, it's clear that these goals not only haven't been reached, but the trend has gone the opposite way: medical waste output in the United States has only increased.

In 1987 the EPA reported the per-bed per-day hospital waste generation to be 13 pounds. Some estimates put the number closer to 23 pounds per day per bed. Regardless, that's much lower than current numbers. Today, Practice Greenhealth estimates that amount to be 33 pounds per day per bed — and that's only including hospitals that have already reduced their waste.

Until more hospitals decide that the cost of not recycling is greater than the cost to do so, our country's medical waste will continue to pile up in our landfills — or wash up on our beaches (medical waste was recently found on a beach in New Jersey).

"The bigger issue is why don't we have a bigger incentive in recycling all this stuff," said Caesar Djavaherian. "I don't think I have a great solution other than avoiding hospitals." ●

Most hospitals and doctor's offices do not contain recycling bins

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InterPlay offers stress relief, meditation, exercise, and fun, according to its adherents. Carly Rosin

CULTURE SPY

PLAYING WITH OURSELVES

Founded in Oakland, InterPlay incorporates free-form movement and speech into a New Agey form of expression that's gained a worldwide following.

By Corey Hill

Inside the airy InterPlay studio on Telegraph Avenue in Oakland, a small group of men and women are running at full speed, the dull slap of toes and heels on the hardwood dance floor filling the air. They stop, then change direction. Some are waving their hands, some are moving backwards. Some are emitting low hoots.

To outsiders, this freewheeling exploration of movement and sound might raise an eyebrow or two — or at the very least, resemble a caricature of West Coast ethos. It's not interpretive dance or theater, even though it looks like those things. And it's not just another New Age fad. According to adherents, InterPlay is a powerful tool for healing and development, offering stress relief, meditation, exercise, and fun in one package.

The approach has garnered its fair share of supporters. Since 2005, the number of participants in Bay Area classes (there are several locations) has nearly doubled, from 1,800 to 3,200 students annually. The message is finding a home nationally and abroad, too, spread by devotees in Australia and India, and at international conferences.

Founders Cynthia Winton-Henry and Phil Porter, who both have backgrounds in dance, philosophy, and movement, founded InterPlay in 1989 with the idea to move beyond narrowly focused disciplines and develop a form of expression that provided an integrated, holistic approach to healing and communication.

Some of the stretching in InterPlay is a lot like yoga. Breathing instructions echo Buddhist meditation. And the storytelling forms borrow from intro-to-theater classes. But what elevates InterPlay, followers say, is the integration of all of those into one holistic practice. And it is this approach that has inspired social workers and caregivers to adapt InterPlay techniques to provide a new dimension to their work. The wide variety of exercises, some beginning with extremely limited movements, allows for all levels of abilities and mobility to participate.

"Many of the homeless persons coming in off the street are very tense and angry, and InterPlay has reminded them that they can have fun ... a healthy, non-chemical calming technique," said Shirley Cheney, a case manager at St. Mary's Center in Oakland, where workers incorporate InterPlay into the services they provide for low income seniors and families.

Local chaplains are also using InterPlay with hospice patients. According to Porter, one InterPlay leader uses the technique in her grief groups, and several who are therapists and social workers use it with their clients. Others have used InterPlay with HIV patients at the Prasad Community in Pittsburgh, and with people recovering from addiction at the Recovery Cafe in Seattle. InterPlay India founder Prashant Olalekar has focused efforts on India's rural poor tribal populations and prostitutes. InterPlay leaders in Australia have applied it to grade-school students and in private healing practices.

Winton-Henry claims that InterPlay provides an easy means of stress relief. And Porter is confident that InterPlay provides a great benefit, even if it can't always be precisely measured.

"At the moment, scientific research on neurology and behavior is supporting what we have taught for years: the neurological effects and bio-chemical activity that are created by certain activities like meditation or repetitive activity and how helpful they can be," said Porter. "Although we welcome this confirmation, it can also serve to make a point that we have made for years: Do we need to have scientists to tell us that it is good for us to breathe?"

Maybe the science is firm on that point. Anecdotes and testimonials abound about InterPlay's benefits, but case studies are harder to come by. Are the benefits real? Why InterPlay and not yoga? Will it work for the virulently anti touchy feely?

Naturally, these questions lend themselves to firsthand investigation. So I selected my finest storytelling/dancing/meditating pants and headed over to the Tuesday-evening class at InterPlay on Telegraph Avenue. We met in a room with a giant hardwood floor and exposed brick.

The class consisted of three women, three men (including myself), plus instructor Gretchen Wagner. The session began with a few deep breaths. When we exhaled, we were encouraged to make an exaggerated sigh. We inhaled, making an exaggerated sigh. The loudness of the exaggeration was jarring at first. By the third time I sighed as loudly as everyone else.

We moved from movement exercises to storytelling. Seated across from our partner, we were asked to speak for thirty seconds on a "green light" in our lives, something that is going well. We switched roles, and my partner was tasked with devoting thirty seconds to a "stop sign," an obstruction. My partner laid claim to an abundance of stop signs.

From there, we moved on to an exercise called "Run Stop Walk." We were instructed to run where we liked, at whatever speed we liked, and to stop when we liked. We were also instructed, if it so pleased us, to lean up against a partner. People began leaning against one another, resting that way for thirty-second stretches. Then they ran again, slow feet, in straight lines and sideways like excited crabs.

As the activities progressed, vocalization came to the fore. At first it was daunting to "make whatever noise comes naturally to you." But after a half hour's worth of immersion in a room full of people making whatever noises came naturally to them, it seemed, well, natural to do so myself. We capped the hour-and-a-half class with an exercise called "Dance Talk One." We were asked to dance, without form, and speak about either a green light or a stop sign.

The structure of the class, and the welcoming environment, made walking and dancing, and touching strangers completely accessible. I found myself sharing personal information with these six strangers in a way that surprised me.

But whether InterPlay will ever gain mainstream acceptance is doubtful. The unstructured, New-Age aspect of it may be a hurdle for many. There are plenty of benefits to relaxing activities that stimulate creativity, joy, and self-expression, but there are still a good many people who will not brave the frontiers of free-form dancing and vocalization to get there.

At InterPlay, you can dance if you want to. Whether or not you find InterPlay relaxing, meditative, and fun is likely to depend on whether or not you want to. ●

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EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS

Pedalfest Rides Again

After a successful inaugural year, the bicycle festival returns to Jack London Square

Currently there are more than one hundred miles of bicycle lanes and shared bike and car routes weaving throughout the City of Oakland, with another forty miles planned by year's end. It helps explain why, in 2010, the League of American Bicyclists gave the city a bronze award for its bike-friendly streets. And, befitting the city's diversity, at any given moment you might find someone taking advantage of the lanes on a BMX, fixie, scraper bike, cruiser, recumbent, or some other iteration of the versatile machine. To say that bicycle culture is booming in Oakland has become an understatement, and is maybe painfully played out.

Riding the Whiskeydrome

Still, that doesn't mean the phenomenon shouldn't be celebrated — as it was in utmost style at last year's Pedalfest, which organizers say drew between 15,000 and 18,000 people. Held along the waterfront in Jack London Square (Water St. between Clay and Harrison sts., Oakland), the inaugural bike festival featured everything from a pedal-powered ice-cream maker to a circular wooden "Whiskeydrome," a rickety structure on which daring cyclists (including a uniformed Oakland Police officer) rode around in precarious circles. Kids picked up safety skills at a "bike rodeo," bands performed on a bike-powered stage, and BMXers showed off their stunts to large crowds. Suffice it to say the city's largest and most cohesive bike-themed celebration to date (after Bike to Work Day, that is) was a hit.

"It's an event that people were hungry for," said Renee Rivera, executive director of the East Bay Bicycle Coalition, which co-organized the event along with Jack London Square and Bay Area Bikes. "There's this amazing bike culture in the East Bay that's been growing over the past few years, but we'd never had such a big community bicycling event before." So it's not surprising that organizers decided to give the festival another go. The second annual Pedalfest, which will be held on Saturday, August 18, borrows much from last year's programming — including the Whiskeydrome stunts and the New Belgium Brewery beers for sale — but with some fresh features added in. New this year is an exhibition of "Whymcycles," bicycles fancifully refashioned by Davis resident Peter Wagner, and an aerial bike performance called Tangent: Dance on a Bike on a Rope, presented by San Francisco-based Flyaway Productions. Organizers also moved the fest from October to August to run festivities later into the evening.

Perhaps Pedalfest's initial success can be credited to its appeal to bikers of many types. As Rivera pointed out, last year's event drew everyone from serious cyclists to families and art bike aficionados. "The bicycling community is actually made up of a huge number of subentities, but people tend to stay within their groups," she said. "I've been in the bike community for seventeen years now — and this was the first event I've seen where I felt like everyone came out." Aside from the many bike-themed attractions and performances, those who ride out this year will find free ferry rides from San Francisco, complimentary valet bicycle parking, El Taco Bike fare, Bicycle Coffee, and plenty of other two-wheeled delights. 11 a.m.-8 p.m., free. PedalfestJackLondon.com

— Cassie McFadden

ATTRACTIONS

Fridays on the Main With hot rods, classic cars, custom trucks, motorcycles, arts and craft vendors, and live music. Fridays, 6-8 p.m. Continues through Aug. 31. Free. Main Street Plaza, Main St., [illegible]. 925-270-3511. MainStreetMerchants.org.

OHA presents Tour: "The Recycled Shoreline of Oakland Harbor" With a tour of Middle Harbor Shoreline Park to [illegible] geomorphology and discuss the regional rocks being repurposed for the Anthropocene age. Meets at the mast at the USS Oakland, 7th St. and Middle Harbor Rd. Sat., Aug. 18, 10 a.m.-noon, $5-$15, kids under 10 free. 510-763-9218. OaklandHeritage.org.

OHA presents Tour: "West Oakland Blocks, West Oakland Boom Built?" With a tour [illegible] how the West Oakland Boom [illegible] shaped the area. Meets alongside the sculpture garden at 20th and Poplar sts. Sun., Aug. 19, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., $5-$15, kids under 10 free. 510-763-9218. OaklandHeritage.org.

OMCA Screen Printing Demonstration [illegible] and Doug Lawler demonstrate screen printing at the museum's [illegible]. Participants take home [illegible]. Sat., Aug. 18, 2-3:30 p.m., free w/admission. Oakland Museum of California, 1000 Oak St., Oakland. 510-318-8400. MuseumCA.org.

FAIRS, FESTIVALS, & FIESTAS

Caltopia 2012 [illegible] at the campus Recreational Sports Facility (2301 Bancroft Way, Berkeley), with [illegible] and information on student [illegible]. Aug. 19-20, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., free. Caltopia.Berkeley.edu. UC Berkeley, Telegraph Ave. at Bancroft Way, Berkeley.

HEALTH, WELLNESS, & SEXUALITY

Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation [illegible] Elizabeth Anderson [illegible] a mindful breathing workshop for health and well-being. Sat., Aug. 18, 11 a.m., free. Oakland Public Library, [illegible] 3001 E. 12th St., Oakland. 510-535-5600. OaklandLibrary.org.

KIDS

12th Annual [illegible] With free backpacks and information for students and parents [illegible] the importance of making education a family priority. Sat., Aug. 18, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., free. [illegible]. Frank Ogawa Plaza, at 14th St. and Broadway, Oakland.

Art of Math Festival Math and art crafts, including origami, maze making, and 3-D paper sculpture. Wed., Aug. 22, 12-2 p.m., free w/admission. Lawrence Hall of Science, 1 Centennial Dr., Berkeley. 510-642-5133. LawrenceHallofScience.org.

Family Storytelling Night An interactive storytime with professional storyteller [illegible] Johnson. Dinner provided. Wed., Aug. 22, 5:30-8 p.m., free. BANANAS, 5232 Claremont Ave., Oakland. 510-658-0381. BananasInc.org.

Tyke Explorers: [illegible] With flight-themed activities for kids. Tue., Aug. 21, 10 a.m.-[illegible] p.m., $5-$12. Chabot Space & Science Center, 10000 Skyline Blvd., Oakland. 510-336-7373. ChabotSpace.org.

LGBT

United [illegible] An art show to raise [illegible] support transgender and LGBTQ [illegible]. Through Aug. 31. Cafe Gabriela, 918 Broadway, Oakland. 510-763-2233.

RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY

Angel Light Metaphysical Fair With tarot, angel, handwriting, crystal, and psychic, chakra balancing, and aura products and free mini sessions. Sun., Aug. 19, 1-4 p.m., $15. Angel Light Books, 3347 [illegible] Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley. 510-985-1661. AngelLightBooks.com.

[illegible] Imagination: "The [illegible]" Psychoanalyst Susan [illegible] leads a workshop with [illegible] and discussion [illegible] personal versions of [illegible] and relationships to the "Muse." [illegible] Sun., Aug. 19, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., $55. [illegible] California, 1672 University Ave., Berkeley. 510-845-1761. [illegible].

[illegible] Healing Annual Workshop Led by [illegible]. Open to students of all levels. Sat., Aug. 18, 10 a.m.-4:45 p.m., $80. Tibetan Nyingma Institute, 1815 Highland Pl., Berkeley. 510-843-6812. Nyingma.org.

SOCIAL EVENTS

[illegible] and Stars Learn how to Cha Cha on the waterfront. Fri., Aug. 17, 8:30-10 p.m., free. Jack London Square, 54 Washington St., Oakland.

[illegible], Movie, and the Universe With [illegible] activities and [illegible] planetarium shows, observatory [illegible] viewing, and a screening of Apollo 13 in the Megadome theater. Aug. 17-18, 5 p.m. $8-$25. Chabot Space & Science Center, 10000 Skyline Blvd., Oakland. 510-336-7373. ChabotSpace.org.

Family Day Picnic Bring a picnic lunch, chairs, and blankets for family-friendly games, [illegible], and tours of the historic mansion. Sun., Aug. 19, 1-4 p.m., free. [illegible] Historic Estate, [illegible] Peralta Oaks Ct., Oakland. 510-615-[illegible]. [illegible].

Lunch [illegible] Oakland! Brunch [illegible] with [illegible], [illegible], and dancing to funky and soulful jams by DJ [illegible]. Thu., Aug. 16, 12-4 p.m., $12-$15. [illegible]. The House of Music, 428 14th St., Oakland. 510-[illegible]. [illegible].

Noches de Peña Music, art, and dance [illegible] on the struggles and triumphs of Latin America. Fri., Aug. 17, 10 p.m., $8. La Peña Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568. LaPena.org.

Salsa Party With [illegible] and Salsa [illegible] open dancing, and music by DJ [illegible]. Sat., Aug. 18, 7 p.m.-1:30 a.m., $15. [illegible]. [illegible], 5655 Christie Ave., Emeryville. 510-[illegible].

[illegible] Party With poker [illegible] tournament, snacks, and [illegible] to benefit the [illegible] Foundation [illegible]. That [illegible] (1700 [illegible], Oakland). Fri., Aug. 17, 11:30-[illegible] p.m., $40-$75. 510-[illegible]. [illegible].

[illegible] Party An Oakland [illegible] party, with [illegible]. Sat., Aug. 18, 2-3 p.m., [illegible] Cultural [illegible], 2313 [illegible] Ave., Alameda. 510-865-5060. [illegible].

SPORTS & OUTDOORS PARTICIPATORY

Berkeley Path Wanderers: [illegible] With a 1.5-mile walk to [illegible] attractions. Kids 5 to [illegible]. Cameras encouraged. [illegible] to [illegible]@BerkeleyPaths.org. Sat., Aug. 18, 10 a.m., and [illegible]. [illegible] Claremont Ave., Berkeley. 510-[illegible].

[illegible] Safety Inspection [illegible] on how to check wheels, [illegible], brakes, [illegible] handle bars, and check for wear. Sun., Aug. 19, 11 a.m.-noon, free. [illegible], 1950 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. 510-527-4140. REI.com.

[illegible] Hike With an easy informative stroll through the nearby redwoods with an experienced hiker. Wednesdays, 2 p.m., Thu., Aug. 16, 2 p.m., Wed., Aug. 22, 2 p.m. Continues through Aug. 29. $3 w/general admission. Chabot Space & Science Center, 10000 Skyline Blvd., Oakland. 510-336-7373. ChabotSpace.org.

[illegible]-up With weekly adult softball games. Saturdays, 12-2:30 p.m. Continues through Oct. 27, free. 510-[illegible]. [illegible] Ball Field, [illegible] Ave., Oakland. 510-[illegible].

[illegible] With a [illegible] afternoon 4- to 5-mile hike [illegible] the redwoods and a [illegible] the natural environment, followed by a telescope viewing. Rain or shine. Fri., Aug. 17, [illegible] p.m., $[illegible]. Chabot Space & Science Center, 10000 Skyline Blvd., [illegible]. 510-336-7373. ChabotSpace.org.

OMCA Bike Tour Meet at the [illegible] entrance for a bicycle tour through new and old Oakland. Bring a helmet and [illegible]. Ages 12 and up. To RSVP: [illegible]@MuseumCA.org or 510-318-8470. Sun., Aug. 19, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free. Oakland Museum of California, 1000 Oak St., Oakland. 510-318-8400. MuseumCA.org.

[illegible] Yoga [illegible] weekly [illegible] sessions in the garden. Thursdays, 8-8:45 a.m. Continues through Aug. 30, $12-$15. [illegible] Garden, 1550 [illegible] Rd., [illegible]. 925-944-0192. [illegible]Garden.org.

More Listings Online

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Picnics at the [illegible] [illegible], Mondays, 6-7:30 p.m., $3-$5, [illegible]. 510-559-7219. AlbanyCA.org. Ocean View Park, 900 Buchanan St., Albany.

Salt Pond History Hike With a discussion of the history of Alameda County's salt evaporation ponds and a walk to visible remnants left by settlers who [illegible] at the [illegible] more than a [illegible] ago. Ages 18 and up. Sun., Aug. 19, 1-3 p.m., $5-$8. Hayward Shoreline Interpretive Center, 4901 Breakwater Ave., Hayward. 510-670-7270.

Shine Your Birding Light on Shorebirds Spot early migrating birds from Pinebox and [illegible]. Meet at the [illegible] lot at the [illegible] at the [illegible] of San Lorenzo. Ages 12 and up. Sat., Aug. 18, 8:30-11:30 a.m., $8. Hayward Shoreline Interpretive Center, 4901 Breakwater Ave., Hayward. 510-670-7270.

Sunset Stroll With a walk through the garden. Wed., Aug. 22, 5-7:30 p.m., free w/admission. University of California Botanical Garden, 200 Centennial Dr., Berkeley. 510-643-2755. BotanicalGarden.Berkeley.edu.

Tri-For-Fun Triathlon [illegible] With a 400-yard swim, 11-mile bike ride, and 3.1-mile run for all levels. Check-in starts at 5 a.m. Sat., Aug. 18, 7 a.m., $65-$85, 209-785-[illegible]. [illegible]Events.com. Hidden Hills Regional Park, 3600 Stanley Blvd., Pleasanton. 510-544-3230. EBParks.org/Parks/Shadow_Cliffs.

SPORTS-SPECTATOR

Oakland A's Versus the Cleveland Indians. Fri., Aug. 17, 7:05 p.m.; Sat., Aug. 18, 6:05 p.m.; Sun., Aug. 19, 1:05 p.m., $11-$90. O.co Coliseum, 7000 Coliseum Way, Oakland. 510-569-2121. Versus the Minnesota Twins. Aug. 20-21, 7:05 p.m.; Wed., Aug. 22, 12:35 p.m., $11-$90. O.co Coliseum, 7000 Coliseum Way, Oakland. 510-569-2121. Coliseum.com.

UC Berkeley Men's Soccer Versus Sacramento State. Sat., Aug. 18, 2 p.m., free. Edwards Stadium, Bancroft Way at Fulton St., Berkeley. 510-643-7127. CalBears.com/Facilities/Edwards-Stadium.html.

UC Berkeley Women's Soccer Versus San Jose State. Sun., Aug. 19, 2 p.m., free. Edwards Stadium, Bancroft Way at Fulton St., Berkeley. 510-643-7121. CalBears.com/Facilities/Edwards-Stadium.html.

PICKS

Berkeley Juggling & Unicycling Festival

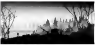
The logistics of putting together a successful festival can be a bit of a juggle — and so it's somewhat ironic that this proved to be the case even for the Berkeley Juggling Club, whose annual recess arts festival was curbed last year when the group had problems securing a venue. Co-organized by the Berkeley Unicyclists, the Berkeley Juggling & Unicycling Festival returns this year with three days of quirky workshops and performances, including everything from instruction in mountain unicycling and juggling for beginners to a Saturday evening variety show ($5-$15) highlighting seasoned performers in both skills. Where else but Berkeley? At Berkeley High School (1980 Allston Way). Friday through Sunday, Aug. 17-19. Fri. 5 p.m.-midnight, Sat. 9 a.m.-midnight, Sun. 9 a.m.-5 p.m., free. BerkeleyJuggling.org *— Cassie McFadden*

Adam Fuller

BACON Art Crawl and BBQ

How to draw a crowd when your business is located just a little bit off the beaten path? The proprietors of three West Berkeley businesses — Local 123 Cafe (2049 San Pablo Ave.), Lanesplitter Pubs (2033 San Pablo Ave.), and Acme Bar (2115 San Pablo Ave.) — found the answer here: Berkeley's answer to Art Murmur (albeit more low-key and less gallery-based): Berkeley Art Crawl Open Neighborhood, or BACON, is a new art walk held on the third Saturday of every month. The second iteration, on Saturday, August 18, includes a pop-up barbecue with sangria specials on Local 123's back patio, and corresponds with the 200 Yards art show on display inside, while Acme serves bacon-themed cocktails and Lanesplitter hosts a live band and displays new art on its walls. Patrons can procure stamps at each business for discounts at the others. 7-10 p.m., free. 510-647-9270 or Local123Cafe.com *— CM*

MUSEUMS & GALLERIES



Vanessa Marsh, "Freeway"

Post Apocalypse

Three artists make bold, doomsday-tinged work.

In the stereopsis test for depth perception, one stares at an apparently random jumble of dots until, all of a sudden, select visual fragments coalesce into a defined shape that then miraculously detaches itself from the page.

Such was my experience at the Kala Art Institute's sprawling *Residency Projects*, the culminating exhibition of work by nine jury-selected fellows. Impressive across the board, the 37 works on display range from the super-minimal, as with Seth Koen's barely-there forms embossed in white paper, to the profuse, as with Lauren Rice's large-scale mixed-media collages.

The show privileges no particular point of entry and promises no overarching coherence. Yet, standing back and taking in the whole, three thematically in-sync artists seemed to link arms and step forward from the rest. The work of Alison O.K. Frost, Vanessa Marsh, and Francesca Pastine makes for a brilliant exhibition in and of itself.

"Post-apocalyptic" seems an apt, if slightly too sensational, way of describing the shared undercurrent here. Frost and Marsh, at least, do not shy away from the word. "I've always had a strange sense of dread or anxiety of a pending environmental doom," said Marsh. "For many (possibly all) people, seemingly opposite urges to insulate and self-destruct exist as driving forces on a personal level, so that pictures of an end of the world as we know it can stand in for the sort of day-to-day 'micro-apocalypse' that we create in our own lives," added Frost. The two artists had never met until midway through their residencies.

To produce her eerie, dreamlike landscapes, Marsh uses an innovative photogram process, in which she layers acetate drawings of West Coast geography and scale models of people, trains, and other objects upon light-sensitive paper, exposing the scene to light at intervals. In effect, things that would normally be lit — radio towers, street lamps — remain dark, while an inexplicable hazy glow emanates from the terrain. Stiff figures, often lugging baggage of some kind, contemplate what feels very much like an aftermath.

Frost's sketches, etchings, and engravings picture nuclear anxiety with a similar serenity, even playfulness. In her DeLillo-esque "HazMat Choir," a rapturous congregation sings in anti-radiation suits. Elsewhere, a cabin rests idyllically in the shadow of power plant cooling towers, as festive party flags deck out what is titled "Chernobyl Theme Park."

Meanwhile, Pastine's sculptures and accompanying ink-print photographs depict striking tribal masks that, upon close inspection, turn out to be fashioned from pages of *The New York Times* stock market gauge. This smart, metaphorically loaded gesture (financial speculation as pagan ritualism, *The New York Times* as cultural totem) warrants a review of its own. In concert with the post-apocalyptic voices of Marsh and Frost, however, the masks emphasize another reading — as anthropological discoveries to be made by future humans, who will contemplate in softly lit wonder the mysterious relics of our own long-since-extinguished civilization.

Residency Projects runs through September 15 at Kala Art Institute (2990 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley). 510-841-7000 or Kala.org

— Alex Bigman

ART GALLERIES

[illegible] 2012 [illegible] With works by artists across the US, [illegible]. Through Aug. 18. [illegible] Berkeley. 510-843-2527. [illegible]

[illegible] Gallery: [illegible] With photographs [illegible] Through Sept. 15. [illegible] Berkeley. [illegible]

[illegible] A solo exhibit [illegible] mixed-media works [illegible] and psychological and emotional spaces. Through Jan. 31, 2013. [illegible] Berkeley. [illegible]

[illegible] Arts Foyer Gallery: [illegible] With large acrylic paintings by Larry Vanderstein(?). Through Oct. [illegible] Albany. [illegible]

[illegible] Art Center Gallery: The annual juried exhibition [illegible] media by [illegible] and many others. Through Sept. 8. [illegible] Berkeley. 510-644-[illegible] BerkeleyArtCenter.org.

[illegible] Gallery: [illegible] A group exhibition surveying the current landscape of painting with glass. [illegible] and [illegible] works. Through Oct. 20. [illegible] Emeryville. 510-596-1318. [illegible]

[illegible] Contemporary: [illegible] With sculptures by Sandra [illegible] and group [illegible] Through Sept. 29. 480 23rd St., Oakland. 510-[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] Gallery: The Elephant in the Room With works by dozens of local artists [illegible] Through Sept. 7. 4120 Piedmont Ave., Oakland. 510-[illegible]

The Compound Gallery & Studios: The Artist as Storyteller A group show with [illegible] Through Aug. 18. [illegible] Oakland. 510-[illegible] TheCompoundGallery.com.

[illegible] With works by Creative Growth artists, [illegible] Aug. 16-Sept. 27. 355 24th St., Oakland. 510-[illegible] CreativeGrowth.org.

[illegible]: Art, Advocacy, and the Legacy of David Brower With nature photography by [illegible] Through Aug. 31. 2150 Allston Way, Berkeley. 510-[illegible] BrowerCenter.org.

[illegible] Gallery: [illegible] Dimensions of Dark With paintings, sculptural installations and [illegible] inspired by the natural world by English artist Catherine [illegible] Through Aug. 24. [illegible] Berkeley. [illegible]

[illegible] Gallery: The 4 R's: [illegible], Reuse, Recycle, and Regrow With earth-conscious works across [illegible] Through Aug. 31. 2005 Ashby Ave., Berkeley. 510-844-[illegible]

[illegible] Screen Printing Art Gallery: [illegible] With [illegible] Through Aug. 25. [illegible] Oakland. 510-[illegible]

[illegible]: No More, No Less With [illegible] Through Aug. 31. [illegible] Berkeley. [illegible]

[illegible] and Art Gallery: [illegible] With hand-printed black-and-white photography by [illegible] Through Aug. 31. [illegible] Oakland. 510-[illegible]

PICKS

Tomlon Zonna, Burrill, "Familiars."

Futuring the Past, Posting the Future

Let's be frank: Video is not the most approachable of art forms. Maybe it's the temporal component ("How long will this require me to stand here?"), or the hegemony of silver screen-style cinema, condemning shirkers of conventional narrative as intentional bores. Whatever the reason, Krowswork owner/director Jasmine Moorhead found that "when I put a video among other non-video works, people will tend to avoid the video." So Moorhead simply did away with non-video works for her celebratory exhibition *Summer of Video Art 2012: Futuring the Past, Posting the Future*. The twelve featured artists present videos that transfix with rhythmic regularity, stimulate with spasmodic imagery, and engage with the immediate environment through live video and 3D modeling, many of them interrogating the ever-interrelated themes of nostalgia and science fiction. There's even some classic rock. Under such circumstances, viewers, Moorhead finds, become receptive to the unique magic video has to offer. *Futuring the Past, Posting the Future* runs through August 25, with special screenings on August 17 and August 24 at 8 p.m. at Krowswork (480 23rd St., Oakland). 510-221-7135 or Krowswork.com *— Alex Bigman*

TheHiveGallery.com.

The Hive Gallery: [illegible] With paintings and illustrations exploring [illegible] Through Aug. 14. [illegible] Oakland. 510-[illegible]

John F. Kennedy University Arts and Consciousness Gallery: [illegible] Topographies of Place With multi-layered drawings and mixed-media works on paper and panels, along with [illegible] Through Aug. 17. 2956 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. 510-[illegible]

[illegible] The pop-up gallery's inaugural exhibit features works [illegible] and many more. Through Aug. 25. 1423 [illegible] Oakland.

[illegible] With works across media exploring how imagination and memory shape the [illegible] Through Sept. 2. 4030 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Oakland. 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Gallery: [illegible] With acrylic paintings by [illegible] Aug. 11-Sept. 29. [illegible] With oil paintings by [illegible] Aug. 11-Sept. 29. 413 [illegible] Oakland. 510-[illegible]

Mercury 20 Gallery: [illegible] With [illegible] Through Sept. 8. [illegible] 475 25th St., Oakland. 510-[illegible] Mercury20.com.

[illegible] With [illegible] Through Aug. 31. [illegible] Oakland. [illegible]

Oakland Art Murmur: [illegible] Art Walk With art, entertainment, and refreshments. Participating businesses showcase art works in storefronts. Third Thursday of every month, 6-9 p.m. Free. [illegible] Oakland. [illegible]

Oakland. OaklandArt.org.

[illegible] Gallery: [illegible] With paintings by [illegible] Through Sept. 22. 441 25th St., Oakland. 510-[illegible]

PRO Arts: [illegible] With works exploring the body by [illegible] Through Aug. 31. **[illegible]** With [illegible] photographs by [illegible] Through Aug. 31. 473 25th St., Oakland. 510-[illegible]

PhotoCentral Gallery and Bookstore: The Golden Gate Bridge: Then and Now With original vintage photographs of the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge by photographer [illegible] Through Sept. 29. 1099 E St., Hayward. 510-[illegible] PhotoCentral.org.

[illegible] Gallery: [illegible] With black and white photographs of [illegible] Through Aug. 18. 2735 [illegible] Berkeley. 510-[illegible]

Pro Arts: [illegible] 2012: [illegible] With works by [illegible] Through Aug. 24. 150 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Oakland. 510-763-[illegible] ProArtsGallery.org.

[illegible] Studios & Gallery: [illegible] With works by East Bay artists. Through Aug. 31. [illegible] Alameda. [illegible]

[illegible] Art Center: [illegible] With mixed media works by [illegible] Through Aug. 11. **[illegible]** With works [illegible] the struggles and successes of [illegible] Through Aug. 11. **[illegible] Art Center [illegible]** With works by more than 100 [illegible] Through Aug. 11. **[illegible]** A collaboration with the Association of Clay and Glass Artists of California, on display in the [illegible] Through Aug. 17. 2540 Barrett Ave., Richmond. 510-620-6772. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] A [illegible] art show [illegible] including [illegible] and more. Through Aug. 24. 2318 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Gallery: [illegible] by Jeff [illegible] Through Aug. 25. 473 25th St., Oakland.

[illegible] Gallery: [illegible] [illegible] Through Sept. 1. 4319 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 415-[illegible]

[illegible] An offsite exhibition at a [illegible] Oakland residence [illegible] Through Aug. 11. [illegible] Oakland. [illegible]

Studio Quercus: [illegible] A retrospective featuring the decade-long collaboration between painter [illegible] and sculptor [illegible] Through Aug. 18. 385 16th St., Oakland. 510-452-[illegible]

[illegible] Gallery: [illegible] With paintings and sculpture by [illegible] Oakland-based artist collective with artists including [illegible] Through Aug. 18. 560 2nd St., Oakland. 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Art Gallery: [illegible] A special collection of works by [illegible] Aug. 17-Sept. 30. 5840 College Ave., Oakland. 510-654-[illegible]

[illegible] Contemporary: [illegible] A group exhibition featuring site-specific watercolors by [illegible] Through Sept. 28. [illegible] Berkeley. 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Gallery: [illegible] With [illegible] recipients of [illegible] Through Sept. 1. 471 25th St., Oakland.

The Warehouse: [illegible] With works influenced by the '60s by artists who lived through the [illegible] Through Aug. 30. [illegible] 28th St., Oakland. 510-[illegible]

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THEATER & COMEDY

I'm Totally Biased

Trying to hold back excitement for W. Kamau Bell's new FX cable series

It might actually be an understatement to say that W. Kamau Bell's FX series premiere was the moment every Bay Area comedy fan has been waiting for — at least since March 28, when the San Francisco-based comedian sent out a press release with the cryptic headline "A Little Bit of Big News." Produced by comedian Chris Rock and wedged between *Anger Management* and Louis C.K.'s *Louie* on the network's Thursday night slot, it's a slicker, more condensed version of Bell's ever-evolving solo performance *The W. Kamau Bell Curve*. And given Kamau's interest in race politics, the title seems like a reclaimed jeer: It's *Totally Biased*.

Last Thursday's premiere came with tons of fanfare, and that's to say nothing of the Twitter campaign that Bell and his social media-savvy brethren launched months ahead of time. It began with a strong endorsement from Rock when he was interviewed on NPR's *Fresh Air* that morning, and pelted with the same questions that Bell asked when he sat down with Rock on *Totally Biased* (e.g., "What was up with that 'white people's independence day' tweet?"). Then came the premiere party in New York, and a screening at The Dark Room in San Francisco, where fans who don't have cable could watch the show in a group for a mere $5. The place was packed.

Think of Bell as a black Jon Stewart — a rather oft-used but instructive comparison. They have the same political thrust, they both use video montages to substantiate their points, and they're both prone to snarky commentary (Bell, addressing a tweeter named "Team No Hoes": "You need to get your education did.") And like his late-night antecedent, Bell knows how to keep pace with a high-metabolism news cycle. The difference, of course, is that Bell is singularly focused on race. His first episode focused on Gabby Douglas' gold medal win and the flap about her hair, the Sikh temple shooting, and New York City's stop-and-frisk law. Although Kamau's vignettes were largely based on the kind of surface-level, man-on-the-street reporting that's commonly used on talk shows, Bell incorporated a lot more social media than some of his older peers (he was an early adopter of Twitter, and he enjoys sparring with random people on the Internet). His commentary was also a lot more pointed — Bell makes no attempt to hide his opinions on stop-and-frisk, and he has no problem scolding Douglas' detractors.

W. Kamau Bell

In many ways *Totally Biased* hews to the tropes of a traditional talk show, which makes it a bit of a throwback. Like most late-night programming, it's recorded before a live studio audience. And it's structured very much like *Stewart* or *Letterman*: A winsome opening monologue followed by some video gags, a little field reporting, and an interview — in that order. At a time when many of his peers are producing so-called "anti-talk shows" (a term *New York Times* writer Jason Zinoman used to describe the new spate of spoofs on Adult Swim network), Bell has stuck with a more predictable formula.

Still, *Totally Biased* has a lot of fresh angles, and a lot of left-field zingers, owing to the creative team behind it. Bell's head writers include Nato Green, Janine Brito, Kevin Avery, and Hari Kondabolu, all old friends or alumni of Bell's *Laughter Against the Machine* Tour. Guitarist Vernon Reid of the band Living Colour composed his theme music; Boots Riley contributed part of the score. Thus, Bell has used his new platform not only to entertain, but also to help boost the careers of other deserving Bay Area talents, some of whom might not otherwise get the opportunity. That's reason enough to watch the show. Not to mention it's anchored by one of the most infectious personalities on television. But I may be biased.

Totally Biased with W. Kamau Bell airs on FX network every Thursday at 11 p.m. FXNetworks.com

— *Rachel Swan*

COMEDY

Capital Comedy With [illegible] de [illegible], Andre [illegible], Eagan Johnson, and LeRoy [illegible] Jr.; hosted by Jay Rich. Fri., Aug. 17, 8 p.m. $10. BrownPaperTickets.com/event/254709. Black Repertory Theater, 3201 Adeline St., Berkeley. 510-652-2120.

Comedy Open Mic Sign-ups @ 9 p.m. Each comic gets 3-5 minutes, with up to a $100 book prize for winner. [illegible] and third Tuesday of every month. 1 p.m. $5. Tommy T's Comedy Steakhouse, 5104 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton. 925-227-1800. tommyts.com

Ebony Eye's Happy Hour with Kim Jong Il A political romp with [illegible] singer Candice Roberts, featuring happy hour cocktails and bar food. Fridays, 6 p.m. Continues through Aug. 31. Free. The Marsh Arts Center, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley. 510-704-8291. TheMarsh.org

Open Mic Comedy A weekly open mic for both veteran and up-and-coming comedians. Sundays, 8 p.m., one-drink minimum. Continental Club, 1658 12th St., Oakland. 510-273-6813. [illegible]Comedy.com

Sunday Night Comedy and Poetry Hosted by LeRoy [illegible]. Ages 21 and up. Sundays, 8 p.m. [illegible]. Island Paradise Club, 1436 Webster St., Alameda. 510-865-3025. IslandParadiseClub.com

The Untold Story With weekly improv comedy. Additional show precedes event @ 8 p.m. Saturdays, 9 p.m. $10-$12. Pan Theater, 2135 Broadway, Oakland. 415-261-1940. PanTheater.com

DANCE-PERFORMANCE

Café Bellie With a 6:20 p.m. bellydancing workshop followed by solo and troupe performances in a variety of styles. A fundraiser for the Women's Daytime Drop-In Center of Berkeley. Sun., Aug. 19, 1:30 p.m. $10. Ashkenaz, 1317 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. 510-525-5054. Ashkenaz.com

LIVE VARIETY

Art Boat Bazaar A monthly showcase of music, spoken word, and a 3000 pop-up indoor-mart. Third Sunday of every month. 3-7 p.m. free. ArtBoatFoundation.org. Starry Plough, 3101 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-841-2082. StarryPlough.com

Showcase Classic Presents: [illegible] La Revolución! Live burlesque and cabaret [illegible] with Lady [illegible], [illegible], Pearl E. Gates, La Bombón Vivo, and more. Sat., Aug. 18, 10 p.m. $12. Shattuck Down Low, 2284 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-[illegible]. ShattuckDownLow.com

Be Heard! Asian American Talent Showcase. With spoken word, music, dancing, video art, and more. Fri., Aug. 17, 7:30 p.m. $8-$10. La Peña Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568. LaPena.org

THEATER & PERFORMING ARTS

As You Like It Cal State East Bay features Dawn Monique Williams [illegible] a romance- and dance-infused adaptation of Shakespeare's tale of betrayal, cross-dressing, romance, and wrestling. Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sun., Aug. 19, 2 p.m. Continues through Aug. 18. $5-$15. Cal State East Bay University Theatre, 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd., Hayward. 510-885-3118. http://class.CSUEastBay.edu/Theatre

Blithe Spirit Mark Rucker directs Noël Coward's [illegible] about a novelist who gets more than he bargained for when conducting research for a book on the occult. Produced by Cal Shakes and performed in an outdoor amphitheater. Sundays, 4 p.m.; Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Tuesdays-Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.; Sat., Sept. 1, 2 p.m. Continues through Sept. 2. $35-$71. CalShakes.org. Bruns Amphitheater, 100 California Shakespeare Theater Way, Orinda.

A Christmas Carol The San Francisco Mime Troupe's Occupy-inspired take on Dickens. [illegible] Wed., Aug. 22, 8 p.m. $23.50; $21.50. Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse, 2020 Addison St., Berkeley. (510) 548-1761. TheFreight.org

Solatia: Out From The Void Carolina "CoCo" [illegible]'s one-woman show combines storytelling with music and sound. Thu., Aug. 16, 8:30 p.m. $10-$15. Subterranean Arthouse, 2179 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. SubterraneanArthouse.org

Bill Reed's The Mayday Debut: [illegible] of the Electric Pink 80s Reed's one-man show chronicles his showcase turns throughout the 1980s, from failed attempts at working as a stripper [illegible] to his stint as a live-in waiter at a retirement hotel. Saturdays, 8:30 p.m.; Sundays, 1 p.m. Continues through Oct. 14. $20-$50. The Marsh Arts Center, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley. 510-704-8291. TheMarsh.org

[illegible] Jan Zvaifler directs a Central Works Method play about the Equal Rights Amendment's decades-long Congressional [illegible]. Sundays, 5 p.m.; Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m. Continues through Aug. 26. $14-$25. 510-558-1381. CentralWorks.org. Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant Ave., Berkeley. 510-848-1800. BerkeleyCityClub.com.

A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Forum A production of the classic play that takes a [illegible] romantic love and social [illegible] with lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. Through Aug. 19. 8 p.m. $27-$56. Woodminster Amphitheater, 3300 Joaquin Miller Rd., Oakland. 510-531-9597. Woodminster.com

Keith Moon/The Real Me Bay Area drummer and actor Mick Berry's [illegible] portrayal of Who drummer Keith Moon. Fridays, 8 p.m.; Thursdays, 8 p.m. Continues through Sept. 21. $15-$30. The Marsh Arts Center, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley. 510-704-8291. themarsh.org

Lost in Yonkers A Pulitzer and Tony Award-winning play about two young boys forced to live with their ill-tempered grandmother and mentally challenged but kind-hearted aunt, while their amateur gangster uncle [illegible]. Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m. Continues through Aug. 26. $10-$18. Chanticleers Theatre, 3683 Quail Ave., Castro Valley. 510-733-5483. Chanticleers.org

Noises Off Michael Frayn's British farce evokes laughter through [illegible]. Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m. Continues through Aug. 18. $12-$15. Live Oak Theatre, 1301 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-841-5580

Precious Little Madeleine George's [illegible], a Shotgun Players Production, about a linguistic scientist and soon-to-be single lesbian mother facing the basic and weird aspects of human nature. Starting Aug. 13. Sundays, 5 p.m.; Saturdays, 3 & 8 p.m.; Fridays, 8 p.m.; Wednesdays, Thursdays, 7 p.m. Continues through Sept. 9. $18-$25. Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby Ave., Berkeley. 510-841-6500. ShotgunPlayers.org

Private Lives Noël Coward's classic "comedy of manners" focuses on the frustration that ensues when a divorced couple, each remarried to a younger spouse, become next door neighbors. Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m.; Thu., Aug. 30, 8 p.m. Continues through Sept. 2. $19-$22. Altarena Playhouse, 1409 High St., Alameda. 510-523-1553. Altarena.org

Subterranean Shakespeare Staged Reading [illegible] directs a reading of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. Mon., Aug. 20, 7:30 p.m. [illegible] Berkeley Arts Festival Storefront, 2133 University Ave., Berkeley.

Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory A [illegible] Playhouse [illegible] Roald Dahl's classic novel. Saturdays, 2 & 7 p.m.; Sundays, 12 & 5 p.m.; Thursdays, 7 p.m. Continues through Aug. 26. $17-$35. Julia Morgan Center for the Arts, 2640 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-845-8542. JuliaMorgan.org

More Listings Online

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PICK

Ion Edwards

U.K.-born, New York-raised, Jamaican comedian Ion Edwards is the kind of comic who loves to opine — so much so, in fact, that he'll speak vociferously on seemingly mundane or trivial things. His thoughts on the perils of surfing: "Let me tell you something. If I play my game that causes me to lose, and now the game wins." On mixed-race women: "It don't matter who their parents are, it could be the two ugliest people from each race. They will combine forces to form the finest daughter you've ever seen in your life." On Los Angeles: "This is the business-card capital of the world." Edwards has an enviable talent for speaking the vernacular of any audience he's addressing, which makes all of his arguments more persuasive, even if he traffics in small observations. He's won over an international fanbase, and he'll surely kill at The Punchline Comedy Club (444 Battery St., San Francisco), where he's featured comic Wednesday through Sunday, Aug. 15-18. $15-$21. PunchlineComedyClub.com or 415-397-7573. — *Rachel Swan*

Ion Edwards

read{indie}

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By Gillian Flynn

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Published by Crown, 6/5/12

Dragons Love Tacos

By Adam Rubin

Illustrated by Daniel Salmieri

$16.99

This picture book is filled with all sorts of useful tips on how to throw a successful dragon party. Most importantly, DON'T EVER EVER serve a dragon spicy salsa!

Published by Dial 6/14/12

Revenge of the Dinotrux

By Chris Gall

$16.99

Kids like dinosaurs. Kids like trucks. Let's all admit right now that it was genius to combine the two. In this second adventure, the Dinotrux find themselves bored with their new role as human playthings and decide to venture out on their own!

Published by Little, Brown Books for Young Readers 5/1/12

BLACK OAK STAFF PICKS

Energy for Future Presidents: The Science Behind the Headlines

By Richard A. Muller

$26.95

Muller is a scientist's scientist. If the facts disagree with his previous position on say global warming, in spite of some of his funding coming from the Koch brothers, he changes his mind. In this wonderful book, a sequel to his equally wonderful *Physics for Future Presidents*, he expands and slightly modifies his views on energy production from the previous work. I don't agree with everything he says, reputable as classic can differ on say the potential for oil from algae or lithium as batteries to bend the curve but every literate person owes it to themselves to read his two books!

Published by Norton 8/6/12

Don't Let the Republican Drive the Bus! A Parody for Voters

By Erich Origen & Gan Golan

$14.99

This wonderful parody of the children's classic is even more timely now that Ryan seems to be driving the Republican bus. And, I think Ryan is the worst of all possible classic: a libertarian in economics and an extreme social conservative, in favor of a personhood amendment and against gay marriage for example while thinking Ayn Rand had it right when it comes to economics. As for the book itself, well it makes its points with humor but it will, I hope, convince you that Republicans should not be determining where we are going as a nation.

Published by Ten Speed Press 8/7/12

How Much Is Enough? Money and the Good Life

By Robert Skidelsky & Edward Skidelsky

$24.95

When I picked this up I thought it would be a (and done) update of Keynes classic 1930 essay "Economic Possibilities for Our Grandchildren." It obviously refers to this essay in great detail since Skidelsky the elder is the world's leading authority on Keynes, but it really is an attempt to give what they think is a correct version of Aristotle's idea of eudaemonia and of course what economic structures would help achieve it. I don't agree with everything they say or suggest but I found the book extremely thought provoking as well as being full of interesting information about the history of economics from an unusual point of view. I recommend it highly.

Published by Other Press, 6/19/12

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LECTURES & LIT

The Return of the Wild Wild West

Rubén Martinez used to live downtown, before he heeded the call of Desert America

What do real estate, drugs, immigrants, and the desert have in common? Everything, according to Rubén Martinez. A journalist, poet, academic, memoirist, and soon-to-be resident artist at Stanford, Los Angeles native Martinez has a blood relationship with the American West. His attraction to the desert was inherited from his father, from Western movies, and from kitschy memorabilia of this last frontier. As an adult, suffering from a predilection for, as he writes in his new book, "every substance deemed controlled by the D.E.A.," he turned to the desert as a sanctuary and a place to get in touch with his roots. Journalistic sensibilities and poetic phrasing fuse to create Martinez's rich memoir of his time there, *Desert America: Boom and Bust in the Old New West*, an exploration of a convergence of artists and concrete-jungle ex-pats who moved to the arid country to reconnect with the last great unexplored American frontier, and ended up unwittingly paving the way for the gentrified real-estate rush at the turn of the century. Martinez reads from the work at Books Inc. (1760 Fourth St., Berkeley) on Tuesday, August 21.

Rubén Martinez

Angela Correa

It all started with a mirage of sorts. "My first vision of the desert was ... an artistic representation of it," Martinez recalled. "A diorama that hung in my grandparents' house in Los Angeles, of a classic western sunset, like a postcard, with the sun setting behind the cactus. It was kitschy but quite pretty." The image stayed with him, even through a period when the West was no longer in fashion. But curiosity and a survival instinct kicked in around 2003, sending Martinez on a quest. "As a kid I just saw horses and vistas, and as an adult I saw the complexity." Over the years, he said, migrants were pushed into the most remote deserts, the most deadly, the ones with the least water. Today, the immigration battlefields are the deserts straddling California, Arizona, and New Mexico. "You have the phenomenon of Mexican and ... indigenous migrants crossing the Native American reservations, and Native American Americans being thrust into the immigration drama, and facing the dangers involved in smuggling." These dangers increasingly include drug trafficking, as humans and narcotics are smuggled together. "I'm struggling with addiction even as I'm seeing its devastation all around me and the completely bloody drug war that's infused the lands with its bloodiness," Martinez said. "Those two motifs are at the center of the book."

Fleeing tempestuous, pricey metropolises like Los Angeles and Mexico City, Martinez and artistic cohorts like Fred Drake and performance artist Ella Arce followed the path set by D.H. Lawrence to Twentynine Palms, near Joshua Tree, and to Velarde, New Mexico, outside Taos, where homesteads meant run-down rentals for $200 a month. But as word spread that these outposts were ripe for the picking, realtors caught up and spread the hype, selling romantic images of the West — carefully omitting Hispanic and Native inhabitants, drugs, violence, and poverty — as an idyllic retreat to be had for pennies. They built it up, people came, and we all know the rest. Boom, bust, retreat.

"What's happening in the desert is a deeply American story," Martinez said. "There's something there that encapsulates the American history of race and class. ... I just can't imagine, having grown up the way I did, not doing something about the desert." 7 p.m., free. 510-525-7777 or BooksInc.net

— Alison Peters

LECTURES

Dr. Anton Tremsin: "Can One See a Flower Through a Stealth Wall? Amazing Capabilities of Neutron Imaging" The UC Berkeley scientists discusses instrumentation he and his team built for NASA, as part of the Science@Cal Lecture Series. In room 100. Sat., Aug. 18, 11 a.m.-noon. UC Berkeley Genetics and Plant Biology Building, UC Berkeley, Berkeley.

Dr. Gordon Frankie: "California Native Bees" The UC Berkeley entomologist and native bee expert discusses the marvels of our native bees. Mon., Aug. 20, 7-8 p.m. El Cerrito City Hall, 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito. El-Cerrito.org.

Jack Petranker: "I, Me, and Mine Walked Into a Bar ... and Other Funny Stories About Language and Self" The Dharma College instructor discusses the complex but often amusing relationship between language and mind. Sat., Aug. 18, 2 p.m., donations accepted. Dharma College, 2222 Harold Way, Berkeley. 510-649-1161 x455. DharmaCollege.com.

[illegible]: "[illegible] Our Towns" The San Francisco State University lecturer discusses the term "Bohemia," its celebrities, major artists of the period, and more. Saturdays, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Continues through Aug. 25. Alpha School of Classical Realism, 4920 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-465-1150. AlphaSchoolOfClassicalRealism.net.

Panel Discussion: "Behind Enemy Lines: The Untold Stories of the World War II 1st and 2nd Filipino Regiments" With speakers including Carlos [illegible]. Sat., Aug. 18, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., $7-$10. USS Hornet Museum, 707 W. Hornet Ave., Alameda. 510-521-8448. USS-Hornet.org.

Robert Lewis: "Discover the Birds of Meadows" The writer and professional bird guide [illegible] and shares photographs of the region's [illegible] bird population. Thu., Aug. 16, 7-9 p.m. Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley. 510-526-3805.

Susan Ellis Chapman: "The Five Keys to Mindful Communication" The psychotherapist and Buddhist practitioner discusses her guide to using good communication for healthy relationships. Fri., Aug. 17, 7 p.m. A Great Good Place for Books, 6120 LaSalle Ave., Oakland. 510-339-8210. GreatGoodPlace.IndieBound.com.

Tom Stienstra: "Walkabout Northern California: Hiking Inn to Inn" The outdoor adventurer gives a presentation about hiking the Bay Area coastline from the Marin Headlands to Point Reyes National Seashore and more. Thu., Aug. 16, 6:30 p.m. REI Berkeley, 1338 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. 510-527-4140. REI.com.

LITERARY EVENTS

The Big You Society [illegible] Discussing Anthony De Mello's *Awareness* [illegible]. Aug. 19, 3 p.m. Books Inc. Alameda, 1344 Park St., Alameda. 510-522-2226. BooksInc.net/Alameda.

[illegible] Review With [illegible], Garrett Murphy, James Siegel, Nora Toomey and Mickey Williams. Sat., Aug. 18, 7 p.m., donations requested. Awaken Cafe, 1429 Broadway, Oakland. 510-468-1440. AwakenCafe.com.

The Great [illegible] Dagmawi Woubshet [illegible]. Mon., Aug. 20, 7 p.m. Diesel, A Bookstore, 5433 College Ave., Oakland. 510-653-9965. DieselBookstore.com.

[illegible] Reading from his new parody *Don't Let the Republican Drive the Bus*. Thu., Aug. 16, 7 p.m. Diesel, A Bookstore, 5433 College Ave., Oakland. 510-653-9965. DieselBookstore.com.

Joshua Cohen Reading from his new book, *Four New Messages*. Mon., Aug. 20, 7 p.m. Books Inc. Berkeley, 1760 Fourth St., Berkeley. 510-525-7777. BooksInc.net/Berkeley.

Lakeview Book Club Discussing Philip Roth's *The Human Stain*. Tue., Aug. 21, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Oakland Public Library Lakeview Branch, 550 El Embarcadero, Oakland. 510-238-7344. OaklandLibrary.org.

[illegible] Issue #4 Release Party. Fri., Aug. 17, 9 p.m., $5. Mile High Club, 3009 Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

PICKS

Patricia Dunn

Art imitates life in Patricia Dunn's *A Ride by Accident*, the story of Egyptian-American Mariam, a character born of Dunn's wish to fill the void of young, Arab heroines. Secretly believing the pop-cultural misconceptions of Egypt as a country where travel is primarily by camel, and where women are subdued and subjected to second-class status, Mariam begins a personal revolution when she's sent to live with her grandmother in Cairo. Caught between identities and countries during the Arab Spring, Mariam eventually comes to terms with her two halves. Dunn reads at the Main Branch of the Oakland Public Library (125 14th St. Oakland) on Wednesday, Aug. 22, 6 p.m., free. 510-238-6668 or OaklandLibrary.org. — *Alison Peters*

Seldon Edwards

[illegible] bestselling author Seldon Edwards celebrates the release of his new book, *The Lost Prince*, a time-traveling love story set in 1897 Vienna and 1980 San Francisco. Boston maiden Eleanor Putnam is given a journal by the first love of her young life. But it's not just any journal, as she soon realizes that it accurately predicts future events in her life. Branded crazy by the therapist du jour (Sigmund Freud), Eleanor eventually must choose between sticking to the script — parental-approved marriage and family — or creating her own adventure of life as she chooses to live it. At A Great Good Place for Books (6120 La Salle Ave., Oakland) on Tuesday, Aug. 21, 7 p.m., free. 510-339-8210 or GreatGoodPlaceIndiebound.com. — *A.P.*

Sophie Yanow

Author [illegible] Canadian cartoonist [illegible] Colosse [illegible] the Escapist Comic Bookstore (3090 Claremont Ave., Berkeley) on Saturday, Aug. 18 for multimedia readings and book signings. Native Californian Sophie Yanow's *In Situ* is a poetic diary strip of daily life amidst Oakland's shifting political climate, and of her move to an artist residency in Montreal, highlighting themes of human desire and discovery. Pop-culture lovers François Samson Dunlop and Alexandre Fontaine Rousseau's unintentionally celibate heroes believe a Warner album is at the heart of their problems. Recently translated from French, the delightfully 1990s-centric *Pinkerton* is the story of two people coming to terms with a breakup, and the end of an indie-rock era. 5 p.m., free. 510-843-6642 or EscapistComics.com — *A.P.*

Sophie Yanow

Unfiltered Stories

Live storytelling is the art of allowing listeners to be in the moment with you during that WTF epiphany, that out-of-body experience, or that time you asked the rhetorical question of yourself: What am I doing? Awaken Cafe (1429 Broadway, Oakland) brings together Bay Area storytellers to do just that on Thursday, Aug. 16, for Unfiltered Stories Awakenings. The event features Ava Roy, Joe Loya, Gina Gold, Susan McNeese, Wesley "Scoop" Nisker, Jeff Greenwald, and Kay Demartini sharing their light bulb moments, including a three-minute, un-memorized, no-notes-allowed and one-participation story. It's destined to be enlightening — and most likely sold-out. 7 p.m., $8, $10. 510-863-1440 or AwakenCafe.com — *A.P.*

Oakland. [illegible]

Marvin Shainock and Al Jopsmans The duo give a literary reading. Fri., Aug. 17, 7-9 p.m. Expressions Gallery, 2035 Ashby Ave., Berkeley. 510-644-4930, ExpressionsGallery.org.

Poetic Discourse Poetry Walk Poets Paula [illegible] and Theresa Newman take a walk through the garden with a discussion of [illegible] poem signs along with poetry readings and more. Wed., Aug. 22, 5:30-7 p.m. [illegible] University of California Botanical Garden, 200 Centennial Dr., Berkeley. 510-643-2755, BotanicalGarden.Berkeley.edu.

Wise Dike & Ego Tries [illegible] Armstrong, [illegible] Charles Ellis, Michelle [illegible] read from *Wise Dike & Ego Tries: The Best of Not* [illegible] Sun., Aug. 19, 7-10 p.m. $5. Art House Gallery & Cultural Center, 2905 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-472-3170, BerkeleyArtHouse.WordPress.com.

Playreaders A weekly group for adults to read aloud from great plays, changing parts frequently. Meets in the fourth floor Story Room. Wednesdays, noon. Berkeley Public Library Central Branch, 2090 Kittredge St., Berkeley. 510-981-6100, BerkeleyPublicLibrary.org.

The Berkeley Renga An exhibition of [illegible] of poetry and experimental fiction, with a reading area, recordings of poems, and a chance to take home a [illegible] found [illegible] East Bay presses. Through Dec. 9. Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA), 2626 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. 510-642-0808, BAMPFA.Berkeley.edu.

The Diesel, Classic [illegible] William Faulkner's [illegible] Sun., Aug. 26, 7 p.m. Diesel, A Bookstore, 5433 College Ave., Oakland. 510-653-9965, DieselJapanese.com.

Third Tuesday Youth Poet Laureate Cynthia Bryant leads a monthly poetry critique. Bring 10 copies of one or two poems for the group. Third Tuesday of every month, 7-9 p.m. Continues through June 17. 925-389-5820. [illegible] com. Towne Center Books, 555 Main St., Pleasanton. 925-846-8826, TowneCenterBooks.com.

Writers' Berkeley and Critique Group Open to all writers. Sponsored by the California Writers Club Berkeley Branch. Sat., Aug. 18, 1-5 p.m.; Sat., Sept. 15, 1-5 p.m.; Sat., Oct. 20, 1-5 p.m.; Sat., Nov. 17, 1-5 p.m.; Sat., Dec. 15, 1-5 p.m. Oakland Public Library Rockridge Branch, 5366 College Ave., Oakland. 510-597-5017, OaklandLibrary.org.

PUBLIC INTEREST

Japanese Lantern Dedication With a dedication of ten Japanese lanterns and a Japanese cherry tree at the Torii Gate at Lake Merritt. Sun., Aug. 19, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Oakland-Fukuoka.org. Lake Merritt, 666 Bellevue Ave., Oakland.

Living Liberally: Drinking Liberally A political discussion group. First and third Sunday of every month, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., free. Luka's Taproom & Lounge, 2221 Broadway, Oakland. 510-451-4677, LukasOakland.com. Plus the first and third Tuesday of every month, 6:30-8:30 p.m., free. Spice Monkey Cafe, 1628 Webster St., Oakland. 510-268-8170, SpiceMonkeyCafe.com.

Moving Beyond Cars, Plans and Strategies for Moving Berkeley With screenings of short films celebrating local and international green transportation solutions, followed by a brainstorming session for alternative transportation in Berkeley. Tue., Aug. 28, 7-9 p.m. $5-$10. Ecology Center, 2530 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. 510-548-2220, EcologyCenter.org.

Oakland Speaks: Youth Share their New Vision for Sexuality Education Asian high schoolers deliver [illegible] report on the state of sex education in the Oakland Unified School District, through skits, music, dance, and poetry. Thu., Aug. 16, 6-8 p.m. ForwardTogether.org. Oakland Asian Cultural Center, 388 9th St., Oakland. 510-637-0455, OACC.cc.

Prisoner Support Letter Writing Weekly on Thursdays, 5 p.m. Long Haul, 3124 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-540-0751, TheLongHaul.org.

Rally and Action for Assata / Oakland Bradley Manning Thu., Aug. 16, 5 p.m. 510-488-3559, BradleyManning.org. Frank Ogawa Plaza, at 14th St. and Broadway, Oakland.

Farewell for a Free Tibet Public Ceremony With a ceremony to relaunch the 1913 Tibetan Proclamation of Independence. At 3290 Adeline Ave., Ste. 200, [illegible] Fri., Aug. 17, 7 p.m.

SPOKEN WORD

The Berkeley Slam With [illegible], word and an improvisational band [illegible] by Bobby Coates, [illegible] Jamie DeWolf, [illegible] and Katelyn Lucas. Cash prizes each week. Wednesdays, 8 p.m. $7. Starry Plough, 3101 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-841-2082, StarryPloughPub.com.

The Blue Candle A weekly open mic for up-and-coming spoken word artists, poets, and comedians. Sign-up begins at 8 p.m. Tuesdays, 8:30 p.m., free. Disney's Locker, 5837 [illegible] Ave., Oakland. 510-428-1935, [illegible]

The [illegible] Slam Poetry Slam and Open Mic Hosted by three-time Grand Slam Champion [illegible] with music by DJ Harvey Kent. All ages welcome. Earn points to be on the 2012 Slam team. First and third Sunday of every month, 11:30 [illegible] p.m. $5-$7. 888-588-8577, GSlam.com. Grand Lake Coffee House, 441 Grand Ave., Oakland. 510-832-1567.

Mike Dr Paul Fri., Aug. 17, 8 p.m. Awaken Cafe, 1429 Broadway, Oakland. 510-893-3410, AwakenCafe.com.

Poetry Unearthed A twice-monthly open mic with featured readers. Hosted by poetry ensemble [illegible] First and third Tuesday of every month, 7:30-8 p.m., free. World Ground Cafe, 3726 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland. 510-482-2908, WorldGroundCafe.com.

Storytelling Swap Storytelling open mic hosted by Cathy Travis. Third Thursday of every month, 7-9 p.m., free. Frank Bette Center for the Arts, 1601 Paru St., Alameda. 510-523-6957, FrankBetteCenter.org.

The Berkeley Slam Bobby Coates, Joe Jamie DeWolf, Seven, and Katelyn Lucas host poetry, word and a live improvisational band [illegible] Cash prizes. Wed., Aug. 22, 8 p.m. $7. Starry Plough, 3101 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-841-2082, StarryPloughPub.com.

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The potato gnocchi, made from Japanese yams, was hearty and sweet. Stephen Loewinsohn

THE NEW ASIAN FUSION

Hopscotch serves up uniquely Japanese-American fare in a Fifties diner setting.

By Luke Tsai

Remember the late Nineties and early Aughts, when Asian fusion cuisine was all the rage — when chefs like Ming Tsai were the culinary toast of the town? All of a sudden it wasn't just the restaurants my parents liked that were serving dumplings and fish cooked in bamboo steamers: Fancy restaurants were cooking fancy versions, and *The New York Times* was writing it up.

As for Tsai, it didn't escape my notice that the guy shared my surname: that he was this handsome Asian face on American TV every week, that he knew his way around a wok, but also knew the French names of things and had the cultural cachet that came along with that.

But these days, savvy American diners tend not to be impressed by the food of old school fusion cooking that was popular a decade ago — dishes that incorporate Asian ingredients heavy-handedly: rib-eye steaks with soy-ginger marinade, a side of wasabi mashed potatoes. No one describes their cooking as "East meets West" anymore.

Instead, we're seeing a new generation of young Asian-American chefs who are slinging dishes infused with the flavors that they grew up with: fish sauce and Sriracha and Kewpie mayonnaise, but also salsa verde and cheese grits. The restaurants aren't upscale: they appeal to a younger demographic. When there is some kind of "fusion," it doesn't feel as French — you're more likely to see riffs on burritos and rice bowls than $30 reinterpretations of bouillabaisse.

Call it "Asian soul food," as Nancy Matsumoto put it in a story she wrote for *The Atlantic* last month, in which she documented the emergence of that "gutsy, high-low mash-up of street food and haute cuisine, old country flavors and new-fangled cooking techniques."

In New York, David Chang and his Momofuku empire carry the banner. Here in Oakland, we have James Syhabout at Hawker Fare. These are the folks with whom Kyle Itani, the chef and co-owner of the new Uptown restaurant Hopscotch, seems to identify.

Itani is half Japanese — a fourth-generation *Yonsei* who cut his teeth cooking at Yoshi's Oakland, eventually rising to the position of chef de cuisine. When he started thinking about opening his own place, he noticed that first- and second-generation immigrants run most Japanese dining establishments. So he decided that he wanted to create a restaurant that would speak more to his own experience as a Japanese American.

At first glance, Hopscotch seems like a weird combination of seemingly disparate elements: There's a retro Fifties diner aesthetic, including old-fashioned red bar stools — holdovers from when the place was Chef Edwards' Bar-B-Que. There's a scotch-centric bar program. And, of course, there's the Northern California-inflected Asian fusion menu, which doesn't seem especially Asian until you read some of the listed ingredients — the menu is more Wood Tavern than Mission Chinese Food.

Dinner typically starts with a complimentary amuse-bouche that'll give you a sense of what to expect. During one visit the amuse was a single bite of tender-crisp green beans served in a pine-nut-and-tofu purée. Another time it was a small bowl of tempura-fried chickpeas served with a dollop of green wasabi paste — Itani's fresh-out-of-the-fryer take on wasabi peas, the popular Japanese snack.

With the rest of the menu, too, Japanese elements were incorporated with a dash of whimsy but also with precision and restraint. House-made duck fat potato chips were served with a tangy yuzu aioli that cut their heaviness. A salad of heirloom tomatoes came with pickled onions and oyster mushrooms, grassy tatsoi leaves, and an umami-rich dashi-based dressing that brought it all together.

A rustic pâté was made with two kinds of liver (pork and veal) and had the mellow sweetness of Korean fermented black garlic. And its accoutrements were pitch perfect: buttery toasts, spicy whole-grain mustard made with Asahi black beer, and house-made tsukemono — or "Japanese sauerkraut." Prepared with salt in a traditional Japanese pickle press, the cabbage and seaweed 'kraut took on a slightly fermented quality, more like mild kimchi than a vinegary pickle.

My favorite among the entrées was the hearty sweet potato gnocchi. Made from white-fleshed Japanese yams, the gnocchi were nicely pan-fried so that about every other one had wonderfully crisp edges. Underneath, a layer of sweet potato purée added an additional element of sweetness. The rest of the plate was classic fall flavors: fried sage, brown-butter crème fraîche, and incredibly fragrant oyster, shiitake, and Hen of the Woods mushrooms.

Also memorable was the perfectly broiled Arctic char, which was a study in complementary flavors and contrasting textures: not just the crispy skin and silky flesh, but also the creamy aged miso underneath and the accompanying fried squash blossoms, which were stuffed with salted cod.

The only relatively pedestrian item was the First Base Burger, which sounded more exotic than it was. Itani slow-braises whole beef tongues for this dish, then slices them up and griddles the meat on the flat top — you end up with a few shreds of tender meat on top of the burger itself, but if you aren't paying attention, you won't even notice them. But that's not much of a knock: It's still a solid, well-built burger with a pleasantly chewy, coarse-ground patty.

Despite the casual diner setting, the service at Hopscotch — headed up by co-owner Jenny Schwarz — is some of the best and friendliest I've experienced in a while. The servers are knowledgeable about the food and give enthusiastic recommendations, and everyone is just damned friendly.

It's a place where you feel entirely comfortable dining by yourself at the bar — the better to soak in the atmosphere and focus on the interesting food in front of you. It's a place, I'm sure, from which Ming Tsai himself would draw inspiration. ◆

LukeTsai@EastBayExpress.com

Hopscotch

1915 San Pablo Ave., Oakland
510-788-6217
Hours: Tues-Thur 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m.
Fri 11:30 a.m.-11 p.m., Sat. 10:30 a.m.-11 p.m., Sun. 10:30 a.m.-10 p.m.
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Sample Menu

Heirloom Tomatoes	$9
Black Garlic Pork and Veal Pâté	$11
Sweet Potato Gnocchi	$14
First Base Burger	$14
Beignets	$7

WHAT THE FORK

NEW PROJECT FOR FORMER VITUS CHEF: CAFÉ Q

Plus Borinquen Soul food truck brings a taste of Puerto Rico to the East Bay

By Luke Tsai

When we last heard from Jesse Branstetter, the chef was toiling away at Vitus, the recently shuttered (and now nomadic) Jack London district club. *Express* scribe Jesse Hirsch gave a glowing review of the kitchen's sandwich-heavy menu but was less impressed with the service and atmosphere at a venue that never felt like it was intended to be a dining establishment.

The disconnect caused Hirsch to speculate that the Chop Bar founding partner's tenure at Vitus might not be long for this world. In March, that prophecy came true: With little fanfare, Branstetter left Vitus and dropped off the map. Only recently did I find out what he's been up to: a consulting gig at Alameda's Café Q (2302 Encinal Ave.).

Branstetter explained that the cafe's owners, siblings Minh and Thuhuong Nguyen, hired him to help turn around a struggling business. When he first came on, the restaurant had a panoply of problems straight out of an episode of *Restaurant Stakeout*: The previous chef had been buying low-quality ingredients, members of the staff were stealing drinks and loafing around. And students from nearby Alameda High School would hog up table space during lunch hour, often without ordering anything.

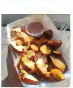
So Branstetter hired a brand new staff, rearranged the dining area to discourage freeloaders, and slowly revamped the menu. About a month ago, the Nguyens offered Branstetter a partnership and the title of executive chef. He accepted.

Most of the food on the menu falls into the category of classic Americana, with a few Latin-American accents. There are breakfast burritos and French toast and lots of sandwiches — the "yam and cheese" is one of Branstetter's signature dishes. A couple weeks ago he launched dinner service with such comfort grub as turkey meatloaf and baby back ribs.

Branstetter has developed something of a cult following, in part because the chef has been so elusive: He was at Vitus for about half a year; his last project before that, 1015 Clay, lasted all of two months. There was a bit of drama surrounding both ventures.

Meanwhile, he had only had positive things to say about the Nguyens. But when I asked Branstetter if he would be settling down at this new venture for the long haul, he hedged, saying he'd still like to open a restaurant in Oakland someday.

Nevertheless, he said that for at least the next six months he'll be devoting all of his energy to Cafe Q. So long as he's there, it's a good bet that loyal customers from Branstetter's previous gigs will find a way to swing over to Alameda.



Borinquen Soul's food has bold seasoning. Luke Tsai

Food for the Homesick Boricua

Oakland's Mexican food scene deserves all the praise it gets, but the Bay Area has a paucity of options for many of the other Latin American cuisines.

Chris Caraballo and Eric Rivera, two Puerto Rican New Yorkers who moved to Oakland four years ago, decided to take things in their own hands. The duo started a catering company called Borinquen Soul, serving up traditional dishes like *empanadillas* (beef turnovers) and *arroz con gandules* (rice with pigeon peas). Three months ago, their operation went mobile, as the pair launched what they say is the first Puerto Rican food truck in Northern California.

Caraballo explained that their goal isn't just to serve Puerto Rican food; it's to expose folks in the Bay Area to Puerto Rican culture as a whole. Thanks to a mixtape created by Rivera's cousin, a New York City-based DJ, the truck reps Puerto Rican music as well: a mix of salsa, reggaeton, and hip-hop that potential customers can hear from several blocks away.

Caraballo, 34, worked for years in the hotel business; Rivera, 42, had managed bars and lounges. But the dishes they serve on the Borinquen Soul truck are straight-up abuela food: the recipes passed down from Caraballo's mother and grandmother.

On a recent visit, I had a chance to try Borinquen Soul's *pollo encebollado* — traditionally a stewed chicken dish, but the version I had was grilled with onions and garlic. The spice-rubbed chicken breast was a shade drier than I would have liked, but was packed with flavor. This was served over a bed of yellow *sofrito* rice flecked with pigeon peas — interesting, chewy little legumes for those who haven't had them. All in all, it was a satisfying meal, especially well-suited for folks who like bold seasoning (and aren't salt-phobic).

Other recurring menu items are Puerto Rican *pasteles* (a masa-based item somewhat similar to a tamale), *alcapurrias* (beef fritters), and garlicky twice-fried *tostones*.

Look for Borinquen Soul in front of the Liege Spirits Lounge on Tuesdays evenings, at The Den on Wednesdays, and at Penelope on Thursdays. The truck also works the late-night club crowd at AIR Lounge on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On weekends, the truck's schedule is less rigid, so check Facebook or Twitter for details. ●

Luke.Tsai@EastBayExpress.com

This column is culled from our blog of the same name.

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RESTAURANTS & CAFES

Japanese and Asian Fusion Restaurants

Angelfish
883 Island Dr., Ste. C-2, Alameda, 510-629-1460. Some of the freshest, most elegantly prepared sushi in the East Bay can be found in a strip mall in southern Alameda. The owner and chef, a Kirala former partner, charms everyone who walks through the door with his sunny disposition and sophisticated palate. Most eaters will find a few classic entrées. Everyone else should make a meal from the specials board, which features creative, seasonal dishes and the catch of the moment. $-$$

B-Dama
4301 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-420-1978. In 2003, Chiharu Ono helped open perennially jammed Geta Sushi with his brother-in-law. But Ono hung up his makisushi rolling mat to open B-Dama, which offers one of the few authentic izakaya experiences in the East Bay. The wide-ranging menu includes yakitori, little skewers of chicken (including bits like skin, hearts, and cartilage) grilled over charcoal, and a diversity of other dishes, from sunomono (salads) to stewed things, like the gyutan, beef tongue cooked over the course of two days until the texture is like velvet. Some of the portioning seems out of scale, and the tiny space isn't super-comfortable, but for anyone seeking to experience some six-hour simulacrum of Japanese pub drinking, B-Dama's the place. $$

Cha-Ya
1686 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-981-1213. Zen temple cuisine — shojin to those in the know — is strictly vegetarian, with architectural arrangements of land and sea veggies whose subtlety, sauced and unsauced, blasts any fears you might have about boring blandness. Chef-owner Atsushi Katsumata was trained in Japan. His menu includes shredded-vegetable and seaweed salads, satisfying noodle soups, and sushi. The pot-sticker-like gyoza positively burst with flavor. $$

Coach Sushi
532 [illegible] Ave., Oakland, 510-834-[illegible]. Owner Hiro Okada was a baseball coach in Tokyo, but chances are he wasn't the kind who kicked dirt at the umps. The smiling Okada is a sweetie of a host, which is what sets his unassuming sushi joint apart from a gazillion others. Plus at $3.50, the miso soup has to be the cheapest here in town — your traditional wooden cup never goes empty. Afterwards, if you can still see straight, etch your name on it; the sushi will have it ready for you next time you show up. $$

GenAsian
1269 MacArthur Blvd., San Leandro, 510-895-8028. Fusion treats like Thai duck-salad crepes and salmon spring rolls are the draw at this sleek bistro, which looks like a set from Peter Greenaway's *The Pillow Book*. Make a meal of stylish small plates with "teasers" and Chinese-style "main events," like sunflower beef or mango prawns, or stick to the Western three-course tradition, designing your meal around more traditional entrées. The service can be as quirky as the food pairings. $$$

Drunken Fish
3324 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-645-1912. You'd be hard pressed to find anyone taking America's baroque approach to sushi quite as far as Drunken Fish. The names of its special rolls — Spicy Crunchy Roll, Volcano Rolls, even a Shrek Roll — are almost as creative as what the wrist-thick rolls contain, which can include four or five types of fish as well as Sriracha sauce, tempura bits, or avocado mayonnaise. (You can get a simple plate of tuna sashimi, too.) Drunken Fish also wins style points for its artfully arranged room. $$

Edoko
1722 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-841-6500. If you believe that sushi buffets are not an abomination but a fantastic bargain — all the comfy salmon, prawns, eel, flying-fish roe, and exotic seaweed you can eat for under twenty bucks — then Edoko is your home away from home. And hominess is the whole point here. Regulars comprise most of the clientele, lingering casually and often for hours on end over sushi, sugar, and sake amid whimsical funky decor that evokes your fun-loving uncle's beach bungalow. The all-you-can-eats also include soup, salad, fried fish, chicken teriyaki, tempura, noodles, fried rice, stir-fried veggies, side dishes, and dessert. On weekend nights, for a few dollars more, sashimi enhances the spread. $$

Ichiro
412 15th St., Oakland, 510-452-1994. Ichi Kanate, a bare-bones sushi restaurant, keeps astonishing people with just how good — and generous — the chef is. A two-tiered lunch combo may fill up your table, and he slices his sashimi so thick you're shocked it still melts in your mouth. He may not offer dozens of varieties of rare fish, but everything, from the fat Americanized spider rolls to the ultra-classic chirashi (bowl of sashimi over sushi rice), is gorgeous. Low prices let you splurge on the eighty-plus sakes in his coolers. $-$$$

Ippuku
2130 Center St., Berkeley, 510-665-1969. Striking Japanese fixtures in recycled wood and raw concrete serve an impressive selection of shochu and small plates of exquisite grilled meats and veggies and other tasty snacks. Opt for the juicy, smoky chicken gizzards, quail, pork belly, or shiitake — or crab croquettes, bitter melon tempura, or lotus root stir-fry. The green-tea soft serve sundae with mochi and red bean paste is the ideal meal-closer. Hip yet friendly setting features shoes-off kotatsu dining areas and authentic Japanese bathrooms. Tiny, pricey portions. $$$

Katana Ya Ramen
10544 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, 510-528-1678. No, not that stuff that costs 99 cents and comes out of a bag with tiny packets of MSG. Katana Ya Ramen, a family-owned joint in a tiny strip mall, does ramen the old-fashioned way — a huge bowl filled with plentiful, chewy, fresh noodles and stuff like roast pork, seaweed, fish cake, and corn. The restaurant's full-service menu (sushi, grilled meats, tempura plus twelve more pages of items), reads like an encyclopedia of popular Japanese food, giving you months and months of dishes to try. $-$$

Kiraku
2566B Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-848-2758. *Izakayas*, the Japanese restaurants serving snacky items to munch on while you down beer and sake, have been in full bloom for awhile in San Francisco. But in the East Bay, Kiraku's owners [illegible] and Sanae Saito feel like pioneers of the form. That's not to say they're *izakaya* purists — they add European, Chinese, and Korean flair to their stable of bar nibbles. This tiny spot has become a late-night favorite for off-work local chefs, hungry for diverse and compelling items like New Zealand deer sashimi, foie gras daikon, and sweet tea blancmange. But take caution. Like tapas, Kiraku's small plates can quickly add up to a big bill. $$

Kirala
2100 Ward St., Berkeley, 510-549-3486. Chic, lively Kirala is a godsend for [illegible] and grazers. Not only does it serve some of the East Bay's freshest, thickest sushi, but the robata grill puts out close to fifty kinds of skewers — from scallops to corn on the cob. And the sake list has been compiled by connoisseurs for connoisseurs. The only downside? The wait. Kirala's already so packed from open to close that they don't take reservations. $$

Koryo Sushi
4390 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-594-0681. Business at Koryo picks up just when other

RECENTLY REVIEWED

Spoon Korean Bistro

933 Ashby Ave., Berkeley, 510-664-2225. When Chi Moon and Jessica Oh opened Solano Avenue's Bowl'd, their mission was to make lesser-known Korean dishes accessible to an American audience. They've kept the same philosophy for Spoon Korean Bistro, their lower-priced, more casual sister restaurant. Spoon is one of the only places around where you can eat Korean food at 8 o'clock in the morning, but the restaurant's many elegant variations of *juk* (Korean rice porridge) and its labor-intensive and fresh-veggie-filled *kimbap* (Korean-style sushi rolls) hit the spot at any time of day. The restaurant also serves an array of street-snack-inspired small bites and — yes — some pretty good barbecue. $-$$

District

827 Washington St., Oakland, 510-272-9101. For the longest time it's been de rigueur to say a place has good *food for a bar* — a backhanded compliment if I've ever heard one. District, a wine bar in Old Oakland, has good food, period — especially chef Rob Cina's playful interpretations of French bistro fare. The steak tartare, for instance, is one of the best in the city — coarsely hand-cut, topped with a fried quail egg, and seasoned with mellow, fruity violet mustard. District's house-made charcuterie also is not to be missed, especially the slightly boozy truffled chicken-liver mousse. And customers just grabbing a quick snack at the bar might do worse than an order of fries, a textbook-perfect version served with a surprisingly light truffled Parmesan aioli for dipping. $$-$$$

Sushi Sho

1075 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, 510-525-1800. Eating at Sushi Sho is defined by idiosyncratic "rules" and restrictions: No reservations, no seating except at the bar (there are tables, but these function as a waiting area), no extra wasabi proffered beyond what chef Akitoshi Kawata ("Aki-san") has already placed in each piece of sushi. And there's not much on the menu apart from traditional, simply-prepared sushi. Despite these limitations — or perhaps because of them — Sushi Sho is one of the best sushi restaurants in the Bay Area. You can't go wrong with Kawata's nigiri, but the cold-smoked salmon and the mentaiko (salted cod roe) are particularly stunning. And the unakyu-style Special A roll blends the unctuousness of grilled eel, the salty pop of flying fish roe, the crunch of cucumber, and the creaminess of avocado. $$$

Soleil's African Cuisine

1544 Webster St., Alameda, 510-228-6747. Alameda's only African restaurant is located inside a bluegrass and country western bar called The Frog and Fiddle — a bit of cognitive dissonance present ever since Soleil's African Cuisine took over the kitchen. Chef Soleil Sanguinetti's pan-African menu spans the continent, and his food is outstanding. There's Congolese saka-saka: slow-cooked cassava leaves recalling some wild and soulful cousin of boiled spinach. There's Senegalese yassa: pan-fried rainbow trout and a mustardy caramelized-onion sauce. Best of all, there's Tanzanian coconut fish: perfectly grilled tilapia served in an elegant coconut-milk-and-spinach sauce. Make sure you ask for some of Sanguinetti's fiery homemade *piri piri* hot sauce on the side, and save room for dessert — the piping-hot banana beignets are a real crowd-pleaser. $$

FuseBOX

2311A Magnolia St., Oakland, 510-444-3100. Chef Sunhui Chang has transformed a seven-hundred-square-foot space in a starkly industrial West Oakland neighborhood into a bustling gem of a lunch spot. The menu riffs on Korean and Japanese bar fare: Chang's version of Korean fried chicken is reminiscent of buffalo wings, except crispier and without the goopy sauce. His pork belly- and mayo-laden Ikura torta is as decadent as any porchetta sandwich. Best of all are the restaurant's creative *banchan* (little side dishes), which come with any combo set. On any given day, the spread might include several variations of Chang's excellent house-made kimchi, a panoply of tiny pickled things (shiitake mushrooms, green mango slices, carrot tops), and more. Equally impressive is how affordable the food is — everything under ten bucks, tax inclusive. $-$$

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restaurateurs would be clearing up the tables around you and looking pointedly at the door. That's because this jewel box of a restaurant is one of the best of the East Bay's scant late-night eateries. By two in the morning you'd expect the cooks to get a little sloppy with the sashimi scattered across the cutting board and start slicing those dwindling fish steaks super-thin, but no: It's still all good. $$

Lin Jia Asian Kitchen

3437 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland, 510-839-8321. Marisa Lam worked in her parents' Chinese takeout restaurant in Hayward for fifteen years, biding her time until she could open her own shop using Mary's chickens, Niman beef, organic produce, and no MSG. Lin Jia is the result, a Chinese restaurant with globetrotting influences from Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and Thailand. Everything is fresh and handsomely prepared, and you won't feel the bloat of cheap takeout, but too-clean Lin Jia sometimes feels lacking in passion. Make sure to order the ethereal wonton soup and the Kau Bau, a deconstructed pork bun. $$

Manpuku

2977 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-848-2536. Shanty little Manpuku is a little bit country, a little bit rock 'n' roll. Locals pack in for inexpensive, homey Japanese standards — noodles, teriyaki dishes, curries, and sushi. Bento boxes with specialties like pork *katsu* and teriyaki salmon hold enough food to stuff a sumo wrestler. At lunch, the refrigerated case of prepackaged sushi and salads empties out fast. $-$$

Marica

5301 College Ave., Oakland, 510-985-8388. This comfortable Rockridge restaurant has transitioned away from its Asian-tinged seafood focus toward that of a more general neighborhood bistro. Like the funky décor, some overwrought items are a hodge-podge, but chef Christopher Cheung has a deft hand with his mesquite-fired grill. All fish is wild-caught and sustainable, but meats are a mixed bag. Six-dollar all-night happy hour brings in a younger crowd after 7 p.m. $$$

Mijori Sushi

3260 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-465-8854. The biggest, thickest, butteriest slabs of fish are to be found at Mijori. And just about everyone in Oakland seems to know it. Sushi chef Jimmy Kim took over the business from his father; he has introduced a line of blockbuster, colorful American-style rolls, but one bite of his *uni* or *hamachi nigiri* will show you that his skills — and his tastes — are steeped in classic Japanese technique. $$

Mitama

5204 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-652-6057. If sushi joints were high school students, Mitama would be the shy art geek that all the honors English girls had crushes on. This quietly chic restaurant, with its buttery walls and clear-plastic sculptures, looks more Berkeley than Japan. Some of the dishes, like the mountain potato salad and asparagus with sesame, are extensions of Japanese food we're accustomed to, while others, like the colorfully named American sushi rolls and battered strips of eel, are as fun as they come. $$-$$$

Miyazen

1147 40th St., Emeryville, 510-

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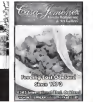
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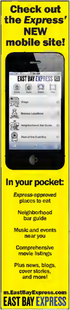
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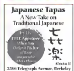
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923-1921. The sleek newest of the Oakland sushi bars Drunken Fish and Koryo, Miyozen is more about the space than the sushi, which tends to be uneven. Come here for the plush visuals, including mod cherry-blossom wallpaper and a winding conveyor belt, which circulates plates of sushi and cheesecake around the massive bar. If you're devoted to [illegible] imitation-crab salad, and avocado, Miyozen just might be the new altar at which you worship. $$

Muo

2442 Webster St., Oakland, 510-238-1100. Husband-and-wife team Hieuk and Sonya Dong preside over what — on a busy night — feels like the fiercest party in Uptown. The 6,500-square-foot loft sprawls in an L-shape through most of the old Rim and Wheel building, a cavernous former garage. Is Muo a bar? Hieuk Dong's painting studio? A chillax zone for art happenings? A bit of all three, actually, and that's the problem. The food gets lost in all the boho clutter. The menu is a wide-ranging collection of small and slightly less-small plates, without much focus but with the kind of inattention to execution that can kill a cocktail buzz. Stick to the shishito fries and KFC-like fried chicken. $$-$$$

Noodle Theory

6099 Claremont Ave., Oakland, 510-595-6988. Louis Kao's handsome little noodle shop is an appealing stir-fry of the vivid and the simple. Good quality meats and poultry — in most cases grilled to a blackened deliciousness — get most of the focus atop basic bowls of soupy ramen or wok-tossed noodles. Grilled chicken over ginger noodles is a home-style dish you could dip your chopsticks into once a week, while grilled beef udon in curry broth is lush and satisfying. Noodles can be a tad overcooked, but you'll happily slurp everything around them. $-$$

O Chame

1830 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-841-8783. Simple, sublime Japanese dishes are served with robust California-Mediterranean accents at this venerable Berkeley destination. The creamy, smoky tuna sashimi with braised leeks is an ideal meal-opener; the ever-changing entrée menu might include delicate grilled sturgeon with a cornucopia of chard, peppers, and mushrooms or chopstick-tender skirt steak with braised spinach and earthy portobello mushrooms. A half dozen fragrant, revivifying noodle bowls are served as well (the roasted oyster-seaweed-daikon variety is especially comforting). Get the milky-sweet oatmeal-[illegible] gelato for dessert. Impressive boutique wine and sake list; handsome Tuscan setting. $$$

Ozumo Oakland

2251 Broadway, Oakland, 510-286-9866. Within two months of its splashy opening, this contemporary Japanese eatery established itself as O Town's sleek new locus of power dining. The concept (sushi and robata bars, fusion snacks, and a pumping lounge) hews closely to its San Francisco sibling, with one exception: Here, in a vast Uptown corner space, the emphasis is on izakaya, traditional sake-bar small plates. That's good news for inveterate grazers and the budget-conscious alike. You can hang out at the roomy oak bar, in high-style surroundings, for a happy hour that starts at 4:30 and never ends. Don't miss the meaty morsels (each only four bucks) from the charcoal-fired robata. $$-$$$$

Plum

2214 Broadway, Oakland, 510-444-7586. Star chef Daniel Patterson's more casual, scaled-down neighborhood version of San Francisco's Coi serves up farm-fresh ingredients in unusual California fusion combinations: deviled eggs with superberry-tarragon relish, oyster stew with parsley root and wheatgrass, braised cauliflower with dandelion salsa verde. The execution doesn't always live up to the high concept, but the beef cheek/oxtail burger is sensational, the artichoke/chervil terrine is lush and delectable, and the white chocolate parfait with huckleberries is a dream. Strikingly dark, sleek setting; impressive wine list. $$$

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Rockin Crawfish

211 Foothill Blvd., Oakland, 510-251-1055. Rockin Crawfish boasts a peculiar hybrid cuisine called "Asian Cajun," bred in the Vietnamese expat community on the Gulf Coast, transformed in Orange County, and finally reborn in the East Bay last year. The focus is boiled seafood by the pound, served in plastic bags at five levels of spiciness. Appetizers are sleepy fried boardwalk fare, but the shellfish is solid, and a gas to eat. Block out a few hours to get messy smashing crabs and ripping the heads off crawfish, washed down with cheap beer. And don't forget to tag the walls with a Sharpie. $-$$

Trader Vic's

9 Anchor Dr., Emeryville, 510-653-3400. After an extensive five-month renovation, the granddaddy of all tiki bars has adopted a more casual 21st-century attitude, with a larger lounge area, more booths and less scorched napery, and a lighter, splashier menu. Some of the food is still deep-fried and heavily sauced, but classics like the ham and Gruyère Cheese Bongo and the oyster-spinach Bongo Bongo Soup continue to delight. Best of all, though, are the dazzling tropical cocktails served in a variety of bowls and flagons, especially the sweet, potent 1944 Mai Tai (a house original). $$$-$$$$

Tsuru Sushi

1427 E. 14th St., San Leandro, 510-352-3148. San Leandro's best Japanese restaurant (run by a large, friendly Chinese-American family) carries not just the Old World standards — sushi, tempura, teriyaki — but funky New World interpretations. Tsuru's sushi chefs specialize in elaborate American rolls, like the E. 14th Roll, a mile-long construction with tempura prawns, avocado, spicy mayonnaise, and tobiko, or the Dynamite Roll, which is dipped in batter and deep-fried. If you've got a party of four to six, make a reservation to sit on the floor in the small, walled-off tatami area. $-$$

Yoshi's Oakland

510 Embarcadero West, Oakland, 510-238-9200. Shotaro Kamio (call him Sho) has a dual identity: The chef champions both Japanese traditions and a style of nouvelle cuisine he calls "sousaku," adding sizzle to a place that has served as snack bar for the adjacent jazz club. The sushi is just okay, but Sho's nouveau dishes excel. Broiled on sake-soaked cedar (an approximate Japanese charcoal), the Kurobuta pork chop is fierce. And barely smoked scallops splattered with truffle oil have the cool fire of vintage Miles. $$$

Zen

2315 Santa Clara Ave., Alameda, 510-521-7070. Zen's eclectic house cuisine encompasses Chinese, Hawaiian, Korean, Italian, and Japanese cooking traditions with unfocused bite and mixed success. The spaghetti with enoki mushrooms and fish roe and the kimchi-ribboned fried rice are tasty examples of comfort food, and the vermicelli with roast duck and mango is a sweet and savory treat, but the chicken glazed yakitori and the panko-crusted fish and chips are best avoided. Desserts are on the hotel-banquet level, but the mango salad is a nice tangy mouth-cleaner. Impressive array of soju and sake cocktails; handsome low-key red-and-black ambience. $$ ●

Price Key
Price codes assume diners will order a main course and beverage, share appetizers and desserts, and tip adequately: $ — up to $10 per person; $$ — $10-$20; $$$ — $20-$50; $$$$ — more than $50

FOOD & WINE

CULINARY & WINE

Market Pizza Workshop Cookbook author and craft baker Melissa [illegible] her favorite dough formulas and sauce recipes. Fri., Aug. 17, 6:30 p.m. $85. Kitchen on Fire West, 2840 Seventh St., Berkeley. 510-548-2665. KitchenOnFire.com.

Glass Off Showdown With rotating food trucks including Fina Tamale, Trotts of the Bay, Hella's Breakfast Truck, Cumbia's Catering, Go Streatery, Tempura of India, Pie of Flour, and more. Fridays, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Continues through Oct. 12. 510-444-0140. [illegible]. Studio One Art Center, 365 45th St., Oakland. 510-594-4121. StudioOneArtCenter.net.

Inna Jam Fruit Company's Introduction to Jam Making Learn how to make single- and mixed-fruit jams from raw fruit, along with proper storing methods. Participants take home two jars of jam. Sun., Aug. 19, 10 a.m.-noon. $80-$85. University of California Botanical Garden, 200 Centennial Dr., Berkeley. 510-643-2755. BotanicalGarden.Berkeley.edu.

Canning Extravaganza Learn simple canning techniques for fresh and luscious and take some home. Sat., Aug. 18, 2-6 p.m. $50-$75 plus $12 supply fee. Institute for Urban Homesteading, 835 56th St., Oakland. 510-827-3050. IUHOakland.com.

Hillside Club Saloon With live jazz by Laura Klein and Terry Dorman. Bring a ready-to-serve dish and beverage. Sat., Aug. 18, 6:30 p.m. Hillside Club, 2286 Cedar St., Berkeley. 510-848-3227. HillsideClub.org.

Meat-ucation: Beef Butchery Class With a demonstration of how a cow is broken down into cuts, and lessons in various butchering techniques. Participants take home eight pounds of assorted cuts and ground beef. Sat., Aug. 18, 7-9 p.m. $150. The Local Butcher Shop, 1600 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-845-6328. TheLocalButcherShop.com.

International Crepes Workshop Learn how to prepare traditional Mexican crepes with [illegible], Chinese crepes, buckwheat crepes, Vietnamese mung crepes, and French crepes Suzette with seasonal fresh fruits. Sat., Aug. 18, 6:30 p.m. $70. Kitchen on Fire West, 2840 Seventh St., Berkeley. 510-548-2665. KitchenOnFire.com.

Science Mastering Day 2012: Science of Sourdough With demonstrations and hands-on experiments to see how these impact bread- and beverage-making. Participants take home a bread starter and recipe. Sat., Aug. 18, 11 a.m. Chabot Space & Science Center, 10000 Skyline Blvd., Oakland. 510-336-7373. ChabotSpace.org.

Market with the Winemaker With Kent and Shauna Rosenblum of Rock Wall Wines. Wed., Aug. 22, 6:30 p.m. $85. [illegible], 1845 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-845-7855. [illegible].com.

Living Lean with Trader Joe's Author Jenn Davidson discusses [illegible] and healthy meal options from the chain grocery store. Wed., Aug. 22, 1 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 6050 El Cerrito Plaza, El Cerrito. 510-[illegible]. BarnesAndNoble.com.

Local Author Dinner with Ashley [illegible]: "Barefoot and in the Kitchen: Vegan Recipes for You" RSVP required. Call [illegible] UniversityPressBooks.com. Fri., Aug. 17, 6-8:30 p.m. $25. University Press Books, 2430 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. 510-548-0585. UniversityPressBooks.com.

Mastering Knife Skills Workshop Learn how to slice, dice, mince, chop, julienne, and chiffonade. Sat., Aug. 18, 12-3 p.m., $85. Kitchen on Fire North, 1509 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-548-2665. KitchenOnFire.com.

Meet the Brewer With Telegraph Brewing. Wed., Aug. 22, 6 p.m. Free. Beer Revolution, 464 3rd St., Oakland. 510-452-2337. Beer-Revolution.com.

North Oakland Crop Swap Bring home-grown and edible fruits and vegetables to swap. Sat., Aug. 18, 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. Oakland Public Library, Temescal Branch, 5205 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-597-5049. OaklandLibrary.org.

Stress-Free Summer Market Workshop Learn how to prepare crostini with grilled summer vegetables and goat cheese, vegetable salad with watermelon salsa, [illegible] sandwiches, barbecue [illegible], and more summer stand [illegible]. Tue., Aug. 21, 6:30-9:30 p.m. $70. Kitchen on Fire North, 1509 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-548-2665. KitchenOnFire.com.

Thomas Coyne Winery Summer Open House With tastings of four new wines and a selection of fine foods and cheeses. Bring a picnic lunch. Aug. 18-19, 12-5 p.m. Thomas Coyne Winery, 51 E. Vallecitos Rd., Livermore. 925-373-6541. ThomasCoyneWinery.com.

Traditional Desserts/Oakland Workshop Learn how to make tiramisu, Roman ricotta cakes, cannoli Siciliani, and almond biscotti. Sun., Aug. 19, 12-3 p.m. $70. Kitchen on Fire West, 2840 Seventh St., Berkeley. 510-548-2665. KitchenOnFire.com.

Urban Wine Xperience: UWX? The East Bay Vintners Alliance presents pourings from more than eighteen East Bay wineries, paired with food by local chefs and live music. Sat., Aug. 18, 1-5 p.m. $30-$60. Rock Wall Wine Company, 2301 Monarch St., Ste. 300, Alameda. 510-522-5100. RockWallWines.com.

Wild Food Walk ForageSF leads a guided walk through the East Bay to identify wild edibles, with a discussion about sustainable harvesting techniques and the history of Bay Area foraging. Visit website for meeting location. Sat., Aug. 18, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. $30. Eventbrite.com/event/3838413700.

Wine Tasting With Urbano of [illegible] wines. Thu., Aug. 16, 1:30-8 p.m. $20-$35. Hillside Club, 2286 Cedar St., Berkeley. 510-848-3227. HillsideClub.org.

Ying Compestine: "Ying's Best One-Dish Meals: Quick & Delicious Recipes for the Entire Family" The author discusses her new healthy cookbook. Sat., Aug. 18, 2-3:30 p.m. Fremont Main Library, 2400 Stevenson Blvd., Fremont. 510-745-1401.

FARMERS' MARKETS

BAHIA Farm Fresh Choice Community Produce Stand Farm Fresh Choice runs produce stands in underserved neighborhoods. Tuesdays, 3:30-6:30 p.m. Free. 510-548-1704. EcologyCenter.org. Bay Area Hispano Institute for Advancement, 1138 Eighth St., Berkeley. 510-525-1463. BAHIAinc.com.

BYA Farm Fresh Choice Community Produce Stand Farm Fresh Choice runs produce stands in underserved neighborhoods. Tuesdays, 3:30-6:30 p.m. Free. 510-548-1704. EcologyCenter.org. Berkeley Youth Alternatives, 1255 Allston Wy., Berkeley. 510-845-9010. BYAOnline.org.

Frances Albrier Farm Fresh Choice Community Produce Stand Farm Fresh Choice runs produce stands in underserved neighborhoods. Wednesdays, 3-6:30 p.m. Free. 510-548-1704. EcologyCenter.org. Frances Albrier Community Center, San Pablo Park, 2800 Park St., Berkeley. 510-981-2850.

Kaiser Permanente Hayward Farmers' Market With vendors selling California produce at the main entrance to the hospital. Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free. PCFMA.com. Kaiser Hayward, 27400 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward.

Kaiser Permanente Oakland Farmers' Market With vendors selling fresh, all-organic fruits and vegetables. Fridays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. PCFMA.com. Kaiser Oakland, 3600 Howe St., Oakland.

North Oakland Children's Hospital Farmers' Market EBT and WIC okay. Tuesdays, 2-6 p.m. Free. 510-250-7957. PhatBeetsProduce.org. Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland, 747 52nd St., Oakland.

North Oakland Phat N' Farmers' Market With a healthy cafe and commercial market space, seasonal organic produce from Bay Area farms, and Non Western goods. Saturdays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. PhatBeetsProduce.org. 947 Stanford Ave., 942 Stanford Ave., Oakland.

Pacific Coast Jack London Square Farmers' Market With seasonal produce, greens, eggs, freshly baked breads, pastries, cut flowers, specialty foods, yoga classes, live music, and arts and crafts for kids. Sundays, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. PCFMA.com. Jack London Square, 55 Broadway, Oakland.

Richmond Farmers' Market With fresh, locally grown fruit, [illegible], mushrooms, [illegible], eggs, and more. Fridays, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. RichmondFarmersMarket.org. Richmond Farmers' Market, 24th St. and Barrett Ave., Richmond.

Richmond Main Street Farmers' Market With fresh fruits and vegetables, baked goods, flowers, and a range of other agricultural and culinary products from local farmers. Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. 510-236-4050. RichmondMainStreet.org. Nevin Plaza, 11th Street and Nevin Avenue, Richmond.

Youth-Led Farm Stand The fresh farm stand in the heart of the Foothill Square neighborhood. Farmers market produce from regional farmers and local school gardens, along with bulk dry goods and nutrition-related products. At 10920 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland. Mondays, 3-6 p.m. Free. FoodCommonsbyCulture.com. ●

PICK

Berkeley Coffee and Tea Festival

Do [illegible] The second annual Berkeley Coffee and Tea Festival, presented by the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce at the Hotel Shattuck Plaza (2086 Allston Way, Berkeley) on Saturday, Aug. 18. Celebrating both beverages and their classic companion treats with booths representing more than twelve local businesses including Silk Road Teas, Madecasse Chocolates, and the Caffe

Mediterraneum, the [illegible] of all, features a traditional Japanese tea ceremony and several workshops. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. $25. 510-549-7000 or BerkeleyCoffeeTeaFest.com. *— Anneli Rufus*

ECOLOGY CENTER
FARMERS' MARKETS

TUESDAYS 2–6:30 pm Adeline Street at 63rd Street

WEDNESDAYS 3–7 pm Solano Avenue at San Pablo, Albany

THURSDAYS 3–7 pm Shattuck Avenue at Rose Street

SATURDAYS 10 am–3 pm Center Street at Martin Luther King Jr. Way

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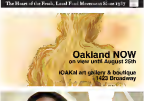

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Friedkin rides again (*Killer Joe*). MBA student graduates from corporate crime (*Easy Money*)

By Kelly Vance

Matthew McConaughey stars as Joe Cooper in *Killer Joe*.

Killer Joe finally opens in East Bay theaters this week, with an NC-17 rating from the MPAA. That rating is so rarely used in mainstream releases that it immediately piqued our interest. What could it be that earned William Friedkin's crude drama a "No One 17 and Under Admitted" label?

It doesn't take long to find out. The film begins with a young man named Chris (Emile Hirsch) banging on the sides of a mobile home in the pouring rain. He's greeted at the door by an eye-level view of Gina Gershon's naked mons pubis. Gershon plays Chris' stepmother, Sharla, and her full-frontal nudity is only the opening salvo in director Friedkin and writer Tracy Letts' pièce de résistance, the most extreme item (so far) in this year's procession of upscale-pedigree sex 'n' violence pics. Yet aside from the graphic scenes of brutality and body parts, *Killer Joe* is noteworthy on its own terms.

Playwright-actor-screenwriter Letts, whose adaptation of his play *Bug* for Friedkin was one of the cinematic highlights of 2006, has a taste for hardscrabble melodrama and trailer-trash burlesque clowning, Texas-style. The charming little family he draws for us here is caught on the horns of a dilemma. Ansel Smith (Thomas Haden Church), dim bulb father of Chris and twelve-year-old Dottie (English actress Juno Temple), and his wife Sharla are short on funds, and have come to the conclusion that murdering Chris and Dottie's offscreen mother for her insurance money is the way to go. Their plans are a little hazy, like their organizational skills. Hot-headed Chris, in desperate need of cash to pay off his gambling debts, suggests hiring Joe Cooper (Matthew McConaughey), a Dallas police officer who moonlights as a hit man, to grease the unwanted matriarch. Bloody salacious miseries multiply from there.

McConaughey dominates the action the minute he strides into the frame in his black western gear and contemptuous sneer. It's been a memorable year for the one-time pretty-boy star of *Amistad* and *The Wedding Planner*. McConaughey's performance as the slick DA in *Bernie* — another darkly humorous Texas crime story — now seems like a rehearsal for his Killer Joe, a depraved hustler with eyes for young Dottie and whatever collateral swag he can score. As Friedkin has noted, McConaughey would never be cast in a film like this in his romantic comedy days. The change of mood suits him. He wears Joe's sleaziness lightly, as if it doesn't really matter.

The Smith family is no match for the killer. Dad Ansel delights in monster-truck TV. Stepmom Sharla deals in sweeping generalizations and tight tops. Chris' rube farm speech reminds us of Lenny in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. Adjectives like "slow" and "unspoiled" come to mind. This also applies to the film's most ambiguous character, Dottie, the catalyst, the bait, the childlike cipher of unknown depth. According to Letts, Dottie is "the keeper of all feminine rage," but to us, she's a walking advertisement for family planning. Watch your step around her. Congratulations to Church, Gershon, Hirsch, and especially Temple, a 23-year-old who can play twelve convincingly — a dream ensemble for a nightmare scenario.

Friedkin, legendary director of *The French Connection* and *The Exorcist*, has been making the rounds taking questions and spilling anecdotes for preview audiences on behalf of his new movie. He sees *Killer Joe* as a kind of Cinderella story in which Dottie's Prince Charming is a hit man. That may be. The film was evidently shot in twenty days with no rehearsals ("I believe more in spontaneity than in perfection") and displays Friedkin's knack for handling actors. According to him, there are three ways of presenting sex and violence: 1) Don't show it; 2) Do it subtly; or 3) Serve it up raw. Nothing in wide release this year is quite so raw or so satisfying. It succeeds as a rare combination of glib deep-grease writing, perfect casting, and the sort of directorial vision that can see through a gut-bucket Grand Guignol and perceive it as a fairy tale. Friedkin's twisty-turny career, 47 years and running, shows no signs of slackening. *Killer Joe* is one the best films of 2012.

Killer Joe

Directed by William Friedkin. With Matthew McConaughey and Juno Temple. Opens Friday.

Easy Money

Directed by Daniel Espinosa. With Joel Kinnaman and Matias Varela. Now playing.

Director Daniel Espinosa, three screenwriters, and novelist Jens Lapidus combine to pack two or three movies' worth of plot motivation into *Easy Money*, aka *Snabba Cash* — an excellent crime yarn about drug smuggling and the arguably more treacherous business of social climbing in Stockholm, Sweden.

Its protagonist is a handsome, studiedly elegant business school A-student named Johan Westlund (played by Joel Kinnaman), whom everybody calls JW. JW comes from modest circumstances but compensates for that by manufacturing a more glamorous life story and sucking up to rich classmates. He's the kind of guy who pins up menswear fashion mag spreads in his bachelor pad. On the side, in order to finance his lifestyle, he also moonlights as a taxi driver for a company run by Albanian and Middle Eastern thugs — which is where his troubles begin.

Alongside JW's thread we witness the jailbreak of Jorge (Matias Varela), a Latino Swedish resident and career criminal who wastes no time hooking up with the same goons JW works for. Their plan: to bring in a container of cocaine from Germany. JW, a noncombatant if there ever was one, lands the job of hiding the red-hot Jorge in his flat, but then doubles down by offering his MBA services and banking connections to the smugglers. Little do they know it, but a rival outfit of even more ruthless Serbian gangsters, including a conflicted hit man named Mrado (Dragomir Mrsic), is planning to rip off the dope shipment.

So we've got Serbian hoods battling Albanian and Latino dope dealers battling cops, with out-of-his-league JW well past the point of no return, still trying to impress his society girlfriend, Sophie (Lisa Henni). Something's gotta give. The progress of JW's ambitions alone would make a dandy drama; ditto Jorge's role as a representative of Sweden's burgeoning multicultural society; ditto the subplot of brutal Mrado and his little daughter Lovisa. Swedish filmmaker Espinosa, whose *Safe House* played earlier this year with Kinnaman in a supporting role, conducts this busy scenario with great urgency. The Kinnaman-Varela-Mrsic combo clicks. *Easy Money* is a 2010 production and the sequel, *Snabba Cash II*, has evidently already opened in Europe. The Scandinavian resurgence continues. ●

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MOVIES & THEATERS

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OPENING

Beloved Christophe Honoré's curious French magic romance attempts to revive the Jacques-Demy-style musical, with iffy results. The songs (by Alex Beaupain) are okay, the performances mostly apt, but the story, [illegible] and dialogue deflate whatever fizz [illegible] the movie. [illegible] Honoré's screenplay traces the lives and loves of a mother and daughter from 1964 to 2007 with flashes of [illegible] from Catherine Deneuve, Ludivine Sagnier, Radivoje Bukvić, and Louis Garrel. Chiara Mastroianni, Paul Schneider, and director-turned-actor Milos Forman fare less well. Lingering questions: What's all this plot device business about the Sagnier/Deneuve character's shoes? [illegible] (Love Songs, In Paris) [illegible] (135 min.) (K.V.)

Killer Joe William Friedkin rides again. The director of *The French Connection*, *The Exorcist*, and *To Live and Die in L.A.* reunites with playwright Tracy Letts (*Bug*) for a hot high-voltage trailer shocker which marries [illegible] burlesque [illegible] and gross-out excess in the story of a Texas trailer-trash family who hires a renegade cop hit man (Matthew McConaughey) to murder the family's matriarch for the insurance money. McConaughey outdoes himself in the title role with vigorous support by Emile Hirsch, Thomas Haden Church, Gina Gershon, and Juno Temple, all the family's [illegible] But it's the tandem of Letts and Friedkin that sets [illegible] apart. The film succeeds as a rare combination of glib deep-grease writing, perfect casting, and the sort of directorial vision that can see through a gut-bucket Grand Guignol and perceive it as a fairy tale. Friedkin's twisty-turny career shows no signs of slackening. One of the best films of 2012. (103 min.) (K.V.)

The Odd Life of Timothy Green Sweet little live-action Disney fable ain't going to upset anyone's equilibrium. [illegible] A small-town [illegible] and wife (Joel Edgerton and Jennifer Garner), desperate to have a child, are surprised one stormy night to find a ten-year-old boy who has grown up out of the ground in their vegetable patch, with leaves on his legs. Timothy (CJ Adams) has valuable life lessons to teach, like it's okay to be different, and love will be loved while you can, because nothing is forever. Writer-director of [illegible] Peter Hedges (About a Boy, What's Eating Gilbert Grape) wrote the screenplay from a story by Ahmet Zappa. Costarring David Morse, [illegible] Wiest, [illegible] Livingston, and [illegible] Rush as Timothy's girlfriend [illegible] (100 min.) (K.V.)

ParaNorman LAIKA Studios, the Portland, Oregon-based animation studio that made *Coraline*, follows with this similarly [illegible] stop-motion 3D effort, which uses the same technology to tell the [illegible] story of a [illegible] kid who can see ghosts. The [illegible] story line and [illegible] make for a slightly depressing experience as Norman (voice of Kodi Smit-McPhee) contends with the undead in order to [illegible] Modern life is [illegible] to the 17th-century [illegible] because the people of the 21st century are more [illegible] than the walking dead. Co-directors Chris Butler (*Coraline*) and Sam Fell (*The Tale of Despereaux*) have both been involved with better work. Screenplay by Butler. With the voices of Casey Affleck, John Goodman, and Jodelle Ferland. (93 min.) (K.V.)

Sparkle *Dreamgirls*-esque musical about a Motown group's rise to the top — and all the tensions that go along with it.

ONGOING

360 [illegible] another "hyperlink" movie (aka "It's all

Showtimes Online

Movie showtimes and online ticket-buying at EastBayExpress.com or by scanning the code below to this mess together"). In this once a further outside of Arthur Schnitzler's 19th-century play *Reigen*, about a linked circle of adulterated characters finding no happiness in their sexual peccadillos. The large, ostensibly able cast — Jude Law, Rachel Weisz, Anthony Hopkins, Ben Foster, Johannes Krisch, Maria Flor, Dinara Drukarova, Jamel Debbouze, et al. — Bare foolish running around Bratislava, Vienna, Paris, London, and Denver in Peter (*Hereafter*) Morgan's screenplay, mechanically staged by director Fernando Meirelles (*City of God*). Moral: Stop whispering and start caring about one another. It's a dull world after all. (111 min.) (K.V.)

Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry Alison Klayman's documentary follows Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei while he prepares to clash with his country's strict government. (91 min.)

The Amazing Spider-Man If only this sequel to Marvel's never-ending superhero series had the same joie de vivre as *The Avengers*. But no. Young Peter Parker (puzzlingly cast British star Andrew Garfield) gets bit by a mutant spider and gradually turns into the Spidey we all know and sometimes love, while tangling with mad scientist Dr. Curt Connors (Rhys Ifans, able looking bewildered in the hero) and romancing comely blond Gwen Stacy (Emma Stone). Aside from the thrilling fight scene in the sewer with Lizard Man, the movie maintains a somber tone that sinks whatever energy director Marc Webb can inject into it. Screenplay by a web of writers led by James Vanderbilt. Co-starring Denis Leary, Martin Sheen, and Sally Field. (136 min.) (K.V.)

Beasts of the Southern Wild It has the contours of a dream: this sometimes [illegible] story by first-time director Benh Zeitlin. Six-year-old Hushpuppy (played beautifully by first-timer Quvenzhané Wallis) and her [illegible] father Wink (Dwight Henry, also a non-actor) live a precarious existence in the Louisiana Gulf Coast wetlands [illegible] called the Bathtub, surrounded by colorful [illegible] neighbors and [illegible]. In Hushpuppy's case [illegible] nightmares of thunderous [illegible] aurochs [illegible] as big changes are looming. The child's adventures — adapted by Zeitlin and Lucy Alibar from the latter's stage play *Juicy & Delicious* — take on the trappings of a fairy tale: a child's point of view of a place even the most prosaic [illegible] would find [illegible]. The [illegible] parts are filled by perfectly cast amateurs, and the [illegible] score by Zeitlin and Dan Romer is superb. A one-of-a-kind experience. (93 min.) (K.V.)

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Bill W. An appropriately sobering, resolutely downbeat documentary chronicle of the life and career of William G. Wilson, co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. Through co-directors Kevin Hanlon and Dan Carracino's montage of old photos, vintage voice tapes, and talk-heads, we learn some of the salient values of AA's program of treating "the Bohemian of drinking," Wilson's efforts to open AA to women and minorities in the post-WWII era, and that Wilson experimented with LSD for himself as an alternate path to faith. This snoozy, informative doc might have worked just as effectively as a book or magazine article rather than a film. (104 min.) (K.V.)

The Bourne Legacy The fourth installment of the popular Bourne series, this time following a new operative (played by Jeremy Renner) who is about to go on the run from an embattled CIA director [illegible] and the program and its officers. Directed by Tony Gilroy; written by Tony and Dan Gilroy and based on Eric Van Lustbader's novel of the same name; also starring Rachel Weisz and Edward Norton. (135 min.)

Brave Pixar's big summer animated film, this time around featuring an [illegible] who is trying to defend her kingdom. Directed by Mark Andrews, Brenda Chapman, and Steve Purcell; written by Andrews, Chapman, Purcell, and Irene Mecchi; with voices by Emma Thompson and Kelly Macdonald. (100 min.)

The Campaign Gag-filled political satire has normal fun with two Southern congressional candidates trying to out-[illegible] each other: a stupid but [illegible] incumbent (Will Ferrell) and a harmless [illegible] (Zach Galifianakis) [illegible] by business interests to win the election and do what he's told. Ferrell is always good in that type of low-down comedy, and Galifianakis emerges as the second banana. [illegible] The supporting cast is rough and rowdy: Jason Sudeikis, Brian Cox, Dan Aykroyd, John Lithgow, Dylan McDermott, Sarah Baker, and Karen Maruyama as Mrs. Yao. [illegible] A few brilliant moments, but director Jay Roach (*Meet the Parents*) can't quite sustain the outrageous humor [illegible] writers Chris Henchy, Shawn Harwell, and Adam McKay. (85 min.)

The Dark Knight Rises From its [illegible] to its [illegible] takeover of the Gotham Exchange to the [illegible] of the [illegible] people's hero, Bane (Tom Hardy with face and voice masking), [illegible] Nolan [illegible] to put a stamp of topicality on the comeback of Batman/Bruce Wayne (Christian Bale again). He more or less succeeds. A [illegible] of Wall Street financiers tangles with [illegible] Bane and his army of [illegible] for control of Gotham City and they both duke it out with the law [illegible] Batman, Catwoman (Anne Hathaway), Alfred the butler (Michael Caine), and police commissioner Gordon (Gary Oldman). It takes its time, and [illegible] some strangely dull action. Batman [illegible] is also still serious. It would have been [illegible] worth of humor in its two-and-a-half-hour-plus running time. Because of its [illegible] overtones, director Nolan's screenplay (written with brother Jonathan Nolan) is more interesting to [illegible] than to actually watch. But of course you have to see it to talk about it. And if you really believe this is just another [illegible] adventure, I've got some slightly used [illegible] I'd like to sell you. Also with Marion Cotillard, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Morgan Freeman, [illegible], Matthew Modine, and Liam Neeson. (164 min.) (K.V.)

Easy Money JW is a complicated guy: in addition to being a brilliant graduate business [illegible] and a social-climbing [illegible] horse, the dandified Stockholm resident (played by Joel Kinnaman from TV's *The Killing*) also moonlights as a [illegible]. That's the first of his big mistakes in

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Daniel Espinosa's [illegible] bold yarn, which [illegible] Latinos and Eastern European drug gangs, a crooked bank takeover, and multifarious betrayals in one nasty Swedish stewpot. Acting bold [illegible] Kinnaman, Matias Varela (as an escaped convict), and Dragomir Mrsic as a conflicted Serbian hit man. Espinosa's [illegible] bang [illegible] by the screenplay by Maria Karlsson, [illegible] Lea Sakanovski, and Fredrik Wikstrom, adapted from the novel by Jens Lapidus. Snabba Cash. (124 min.) (K.V.)

Farewell, My Queen Part of the [illegible] of watching this "other side of history" drama set at the [illegible] of the French Revolution is in knowing that Marie Antoinette (Diane Kruger) and most of the rest of the royal court of Versailles are soon going to lose their heads. But the [illegible] of director Benoît Jacquot's sinuous costume drama is Sidonie Laborde (Léa Seydoux), the dauphine's reader of novels, through whose eyes we observe the [illegible] behind-the-scenes goings-on. Filmmaker Jacquot (Sade, The School of Flesh) has always had a [illegible] for directing actresses, and both Seydoux and Kruger luxuriate in the end-of-an-era [illegible], with major [illegible] by Virginie Ledoyen as Gabrielle de Polignac, the [illegible] of Antoinette's. Best [illegible] (99 min.) (K.V.)

Hope Springs David Frankel's [illegible] comedy starring Meryl Streep, Tommy Lee Jones, and Steve Carell [illegible] about a middle-aged couple hoping to [illegible] their decades-long relationship through a week-long counseling [illegible] (100 min.)

The Imposter This documentary/docudrama hybrid sneaks up on us. It tells the true story [illegible] using re-enactments and to some [illegible] action spoken [illegible] interview subjects [illegible] of the 1994 disappearance of a thirteen-year-old Texas boy, and what happens when he suddenly turns up more than three years later in Spain. Or is it really him? The film's title already gives away the central plot turn, but we won't tell you any more about British filmmaker Bart Layton's intriguing doc, except that it [illegible] similar tone and techniques to Errol Morris' The Thin Blue Line and [illegible] (99 min.) (K.V.)

Magic Mike [illegible] stripping comedy, [illegible] based on star Channing Tatum's real-life experience as a male strip dancer. (That sound you hear is every straight woman and gay man [illegible].) Directed by Steven Soderbergh, written by Reid Carolin, also starring Alex Pettyfer and Olivia Munn. (110 min.)

Moonrise Kingdom From the far-fetched end of the Wes Anderson sensibility (The Darjeeling Limited, The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou) comes the tale of Suzy (Kara Hayward) and Sam (Jared Gilman), a pair of precocious teenage runaways who give everyone on the New England island of New Penzance a chance to launch into [illegible] dialogue [illegible] and the story (by Anderson and Roman Coppola) are [illegible] unremarkable [illegible]. Might have been better as an animation à la Fantastic Mr. Fox — the art direction is considerably more interesting than the story. But then we would have to miss out on Bill Murray, Frances McDormand, Bruce Willis, Tilda Swinton, Jason Schwartzman, Harvey Keitel, and Bob Balaban as [illegible] adult authority figures. Come to think of it, that might not be such a bad idea. A step backward for Anderson. (94 min.) (K.V.)

The Queen of Versailles Jackie Siegel, the free-spending wife of a timeshare tycoon, doesn't have much in common with Marie Antoinette besides her [illegible] habits. [illegible] Jackie is just too nice. That's what gives filmmaker Lauren Greenfield's documentary its sweet [illegible]. We can chortle at the family's tacky conspicuous consumption, but when they lose everything to the economic meltdown, we actually feel sorry for them, with their unfinished 90,000-square-foot dream [illegible] and their neglected [illegible]. Greenfield's thoughtful doc, [illegible] show of [illegible] folly, is actually a [illegible] of the classic [illegible]. The Siegels aren't so different from you and me, and besides, it's therapeutic to laugh at the rich. (100 min.)

Ruby Sparks A hip young Los Angeles novelist named Calvin (Paul Dano) [illegible] and facing writer's block, conjures up the perfect girlfriend: the title character, played by [illegible] Zoe Kazan, who also wrote the screenplay. That is, Ruby is a fictional character come to life, one that the [illegible] can change at will by rewriting his lines in the manuscript. Naturally this spells trouble for Calvin, but even bigger [illegible] for the screenwriters and the directors, Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris (Little Miss Sunshine). Despite the spirited play-acting of Dano and Kazan and the film's entertaining [illegible] of [illegible] local color and [illegible] (Steve Coogan, Annette Bening, Antonio Banderas, et al.), the [illegible] of the [illegible] process [illegible] a juvenile "artists and models" sex fantasy. [illegible] (104 min.) (K.V.)

To Rome With Love Woody Allen's sojourn in Europe (Match Point, Vicky Cristina Barcelona, Midnight in Paris) [illegible] a warmed-over pot of [illegible] comic pastiche about [illegible] group of characters [illegible] Allen's idea of the Eternal City. Best of the [illegible] Roberto Benigni's [illegible] suddenly and inexplicably elevated to celebrity status. But the "central" [illegible] involving [illegible] Jesse Eisenberg, Ellen Page, Greta Gerwig, and Alec Baldwin [illegible] across the finish line. It doesn't [illegible], though, and neither does the silly [illegible] with Penélope Cruz as the [illegible] call girl [illegible]

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lends Alessandra Mastronardi ... the bit about the Allen character, a famous music producer trying to promote an Italian American who can only sing in the shower (Fabio Armiliato) about never have made the cut in Allen's prime period in the 1970s. Also with Judy Davis and Alison Pill. (112 min.) (S.V.)

Total Recall is made to qualify as a Guilty Pleasure, a bad movie ... to be so bad that it's ... The Jessica of the Philip K. Dick sci-fi ... movie into 21st century mind games falls short, narrowly but decisively. On the plus side, superior production design and effects work, especially in the "Fremont" scenes, the physicality of Colin Farrell and Kate Beckinsale as battling spouses bouncing off the walls, and a certain grim sense of fun. The minuses: the Blade Runner ripoff in the aforementioned Fremont sequence; dumb dialogue, a movie lost cut, the complete lack of any sense of humor, and the fact that in the heat of action, Beckinsale and Jessica Biel look too much alike. The remake has it ... it's just an ordinary thriller movie. Screenplay by Kurt Wimmer and Mark Bomback and screen story by Ronald Shusett and Dan O'Bannon plus Jon Povill and Wimmer, adapted from Dick's previously filmed short story We Can Remember It for You Wholesale. Also with Bokeem Woodbine and Bryan Cranston. (118 min.) (K.V.)

Unforgivable It's not quite that bad, the veteran French filmmaker André Téchiné's drama about love and obsession in contemporary Venice is a bit too dry for its own good. A successful writer of crime fiction (André Dussollier) relocates to an island near that fabled Italian city to work on a new book, but his new wife, an enigmatic local real estate agent (Carole Bouquet), makes him jealous to the point of having her followed. Enter a host of unscrupulous, colorful but neither unscrupulous nor colorful enough characters. Chief among them is a young ex-con (Mauro Conte) who has a few troubles of his own. As about Téchiné (The Wild Reeds) ... in his direction of actors, but the screenplay he wrote with ... from a novel by Philippe Djian lets everyone down. Costarring Mélanie Thierry and Adriana Asti. (111 min.) (K.V.)

Showtimes Online

Movie showtimes and online ticket-buying at EastBayExpress.com

ONE-NIGHT STANDS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 16

Back to the Future Part II (108 min., 1989) Flashbacks (in Berkeley 7 Berkeley 8:00)

Trial on the Road (98 min., 1971/1986) In Russian with English subtitles. Russian Intense: The Films of Aleksei Guerman (Pacific Film Archive, Tuesday 7:00)

FRIDAY, AUGUST 17

Close Encounters of the Third Kind (132 min., 1977) Paramount Movie Classics (Paramount Theater, Oakland 8:00)

Drugstore Cowboy (104 min., 1989) Cool World (PFA, 9:15)

Old-Fashioned Sweet (100 min., 1974) In Italian with English subtitles. Bolognini: Leading Ladies of the Italian Screen (PFA, 7:00)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 18

The Birds (120 min., 1963) Universal Pictures Celebrating 100 Years (PFA, 8:30)

The Brain That Wouldn't Die (81 min., 1962) With live show and Medical performances. Cantu Silent Summer Cinema (Center St. between Shattuck and Oxford, twilight)

Khrustalyov, My Car! (138 min., 1998) In Russian with English subtitles. Russian Intense: The Films of Aleksei Guerman (PFA, 6:00)

The Gleaners (82 min., 2000) (Piedmont Theater, Oakland, midnight)

SUNDAY, AUGUST 19

Frenzy (116 min., 1972) Universal Pictures Celebrating 100 Years (PFA, 5:00)

The Joyless Street (125 min., 1925) Berkeley Underground Film Society (708 Gilman St. Berkeley, 1:30)

Special Screening (60 min., 1991) Preceded by (95 min., 1985) With filmmaker Les Blank in person. Always for Pleasure: The Films of Les Blank (PFA, 7:00)

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 22

The Interrupters (80 min., 2011) Preceded by potluck and social hour to 6:30 p.m., followed by discussion. Films of Fact and Life (Humanist Hall, Oakland 7:30)

Il Bell'Antonio (95 min., 1960) In Italian with English subtitles. Bolognini: Leading Ladies of the Italian Screen (PFA, 9:00) ■

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A MORE EXPANSIVE OUTSIDE LANDS

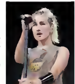
Comedy performance art and audience participation were among the highlights at this year's festival.

By Rachel Swan and Kathleen Richards

Much of Outside Lands' success derives from an airtight booking formula: Festival producers choose a few nostalgia acts to serve as headliners, juxtaposing them with contemporary electronic and indie rock bands of about equal caliber. (This year's Friday night show paired Neil Young & Crazy Horse with French electroclash duo Justice, while Saturday set Metallica against the Icelandic band Sigur Rós.) Many of the second-tier acts come directly from Billboard charts of the Nineties and early 2000s. Thus, the most fresh and compelling bands are often the least obvious — like Afro-Latin hip-hop outfit Bomba Estéreo. Unless you're keen on watching video monitors all day, the smaller billings on the Panhandle stage, tucked in a corner of Hellman Hollow, was often the best place to be.

On paper, this year's festival looked fairly predictable, except that the tent-pole acts were even older than usual — what better way to top Neil Young than book Stevie Wonder for the closing ceremonies? — which probably made them a bigger draw. Yet, in many ways, Outside Lands 2012 was a paradigm shifter. Much of that owed to an adventurous comedy lineup bolstered by partnerships with Nerdist Industries and the Adult Swim network. But that's not to overlook a few creative curatorial decisions. While Stevie Wonder might be an obvious crowd-pleaser, he still has a somewhat anomalous presence in the Outside Lands pantheon, which has traditionally skewed rock — last year's fest closed out with Arcade Fire. In fact, an overview of the 2012 lineup shows a surprising emphasis on world music acts, local up-and-comers, and performance artists like free-associative loop-master Reggie Watts.

That seems to be of a piece with Outside Lands' ever-evolving credo. Festival producers often tout their event as equal parts "music and art," a label that has gained increasing cachet on the festival circuit (Bonnaroo, South by Southwest, Treasure Island, and Coachella seem to always be in an arms race to expand their curatorial reach, even though the same people often produce them.) This year, the "art" part felt well-earned. With outdoor installations, an expanded wine garden, craft beers from sixteen breweries, 65 booths from well vetted restaurateurs, and a wall-to-wall comedy lineup, Outside Lands proved it really is more than a cluster of music stages. No wonder 2012 was the first year it sold out in advance. We were lucky enough to grab tickets, so for those who missed it, here's a brief recap:



Zola Jesus kicked off Saturday's lineup.

Friday

One of the most noticeable things about the crowd at Outside Lands was how non-local it felt: concertgoers were overwhelmingly in their twenties and Southern Californian (or so it seemed, from their lack of warm clothing). While promoters did a great job of booking Bay Area bands, there was some unspoken disconnect with the audience. Take Oakland electro-hip-hop-pop act Wallpaper., who performed an energetic set early in the day on the Twin Peaks stage. When frontman Ricky Reed shouted out the Bay Area at one point, asking how many had seen him play at a party in Berkeley or at the Rickshaw Stop, he got little response. His heavy-on-the-booty-bass set, which included hits "Okay" and "Fucking Best Song Forever," had the most local flavor, but we're not sure if people got it.

It's difficult to describe what, exactly, performance artist/beatboxer/comedian Reggie Watts is doing, but the conclusion is clear: He's fucking brilliant. Interspersing looped beatboxed songs with "comedy" bits, switching voices from nerdy to earnest, and straight to twee to falsetto R&B singer, his nonlinear format seems random, but is also totally engrossing, because you never know what will happen next. We're not sure what's going on inside his brain, but we like it.

Following Watts on the same Sutro stage was New York/Philadelphia's The Walkmen, a band we love in theory but less so in real life. The band's newer material, while containing many of the same elements of its earlier stuff (the jangly, heavily reverbed guitar and impassioned vocals) lacks something vital. The tension keeps building but there's no payoff. Mostly, we want an excuse for drummer Matt Barrick to let loose.

As previously mentioned, the comedy element was so strong at Outside Lands that we could have stayed in the Barbary Tent all weekend and been happy. David Cross, standing with openers Michelle Buteau and Chris Garcia, was, not surprisingly, standing-room only. But Cross was actually kind of disappointing. His long, detailed description of getting a colonic was gross, and amusing, but not nearly as hysterical as New York comedian Buteau, whose delivery was just as funny as her bits about being the lone black girl in Utah and watching black sitcoms to make herself feel better. Not all the bits resonated with the overwhelmingly white audience, as she pointed out, but we thought it was hilarious.

As for the headliners, Beck's performance was solid but seemed somewhat phoned in, Foo Fighters were high-energy and everything you would expect them to be, and Neil Young & Crazy Horse showed that age is not a factor when it comes to rocking out.

Meanwhile, over on the smaller Panhandle Stage, Washed Out's Ernest Greene held court over a modest but decent crowd with his dancey-but-not-douchey electronic music. There's something about it that's at once sad, lonely, and life-affirming — and made us feel like dancing was something elemental and compulsive and not merely drug-induced.

Saturday

After the freezing fogginess of Friday, Saturday's slightly more moderate temperatures were a welcome (albeit brief) respite. The sun's heat radiated through the clouds and down on Zola Jesus, aka singer Nika Roza Danilova, who was the first act on the main Polo Field stage. The 23-year-old's powerful voice and groundedness belie her age, and also make her a joy to watch. Occasionally, she let the giddy young person inside her take over the otherwise serious gothic-electronica persona she's got going on, skipping barefooted around the diamond-shaped stage, and hopping down onto the grass to high-five fans.

Australia's Tame Impala followed that up with a blistering set of throwback dreamy psych-rock. It could have easily been a highlight of the day, but we jogged over to see locals Geographer perform on the opposite end of the park, and kinda wished we hadn't. Although the band's electro-pop is catchy, fun, and totally inoffensive, it also wasn't the deepest of musical experiences.

A surprisingly great set came from Father John Misty, aka former Fleet Foxes drummer J. Tillman, over on the Panhandle Stage. If that name conjures any negative emotions from you, don't let it. Tillman's performance was electrifying, befitting his bold Americana folk rock sound, as his lithe body flailed in the fog, seemingly inhabited by some other (warmer) life force.

The reunion performance of Grandaddy was another highlight of the weekend. The Modesto guys played "Hewlett's Daughter" and "Now It's On," amongst other old-school space-rock gems, as if it hadn't been dormant for the last six years. Everyone rocked like it was 2001.

If fireballs and light shows are your thing, then Metallica's headlining performance would have been the pinnacle of your Outside Lands experience, which it most definitely was for the older metalheads who came out for the show, plus some likely new converts. The band tore through a set of classics like "Ride the Lightning," "Master of Puppets," and "One," plus more recent material.

That set couldn't have been more different than Sigur Rós on the opposite end of the park, with its epic, orchestral rock and light show that had the effect of transporting listeners to some far-off place where you reflect on life's trying experiences and how you've overcome them. Despite being cold and tired, there was no place we would have rather been.

Sunday

It's to be expected that Sunday ticketholders fritter most of the afternoon away waiting for the headliner. A combination of heavy fog and a spotty main stage lineup (Jack White — yay! Regina Spektor — meh) guaranteed that this Sunday would be no exception. Add to that a slight delay between the sound and video synching, which had been perfectly engineered to capture all of Metallica's E-minor power chords the night before. It wasn't until about 4:30 p.m. that things started to really pick up.

But then the festival improved precipitously. The real turning point, surprisingly, happened at the Panhandle Stage, where Berkeley-generated, Los Angeles-based act Electric Guest unleashed its bubbly, burbly ear candy for an audience of perhaps a couple hundred. Singer Asa Taccone spawned from a well-entrenched Berkeley arts dynasty (his father is Berkeley Repertory Theatre Artistic Director Tony Taccone, and his brother, Jorma Taccone, is a writer for *Saturday Night Live* and a member of sketch-comedy troupe The Lonely Island), and he has an adorable alto to boot — it's several pitches deeper than Justin Bieber, though he occasionally veers into falsetto range. The band's most popular song, "This Head I Hold," is a self-conscious homage to Fifties doo-wop and Phil Spector girl groups. It's buoyed by slick production from Danger Mouse (aka Brian Burton), who was lounging out quietly backstage.

Santigold, who took the Twin Peaks stage around 5 p.m., was a much-anticipated festival highlight. For those who've ogled the wackish dancehall-fusion singer on YouTube, she's much better live — that owes both to high production values and the fact that "dancehall fusion," a scary combination on paper, is electrifying onstage. Her set involved several costume changes, two extremely fly backup dancers, a drummer and bassist dressed as Queen of Hearts sentries (or foot soldiers with "modified foreign legion hats," as one observer shrewdly pointed out), and an opportunity for audience members to get onstage, which seemed like a bold move, by Outside Lands standards. Fortunately, the festival crew is so competent that all of her antics went off without a hitch. "Okay, put them in a corner," Santigold ordered a stagehand, as two particularly ardent fans climbed up for the last number. "I don't want you fucking with what my girls got going on," she said, gesturing offhandedly to the chorus line. Then she smiled. "But do your thing — dance."

Stevie Wonder came on at about 7:30 p.m., and from the looks of it, pretty much everybody in the park migrated over to the Lands End stage to watch him (Wonder's only competition was "brostep" DJ Skrillex). And here's where we have to confess that we stopped tweeting and taking notes, because the final set was so dazzling. Wonder, who hit the news cycle last week after filing divorce papers to end eleven years of marriage with Kai Millard Morris, is back in full form. His set, performed with three stiletto-heeled backup singers and a funk band that included Bay Area keyboardist Victoria Theodore, quickly devolved into Stevie Wonder karaoke. Audience members who didn't own all of Wonder's Motown LPs — and most of them probably did not — could easily sing along to the choruses of "Superstition," "Isn't She Lovely," and "I Just Called to Say I Love You." The singer didn't seem to have an encore prepared — instead, he led the band in what sounded like an impromptu version of The Temptations' "My Girl." It was transcendent. ●

Rachel.Swan@EastBayExpress.com

INTERPRETING DRMS

The Oakland band's hip sensibility belies its musical scholarship

By Rachel Swan

Emily Ritz's speaking voice is a few pitches higher than her singing voice, but otherwise the two are uncannily similar: trembling and raspy but steel-wool-coarse around the edges. Offstage, she has the veneer of being a wallflower or a recluse, speaking quietly, carefully parsing words, and avoiding eye contact — a 2008 YouTube video called "Emily Sings the Blues with Cough Syrup" shows Ritz soliloquizing about honey at a farmers' market, but barely addressing the camera. In performance, though, she's commanding.

When Ritz took the stage at Swedish American Hall in February, she wore a long pencil skirt and a fashionable bob haircut, and swayed sensuously as she sang the lyrics to "Take Me," a love song that sounds like a plea. Behind her sat members of DRMS (pronounced "dreams"), the eight-piece, Oakland-based ensemble that Ritz fronts with keyboardist Rob Shelton. Playing a strange battery of instruments — Rhodes, lap steel guitar, a bag filled with bottle caps, sandpaper wood blocks, vibraphone, and a metal cake mold — the band members plunked out a breezy, cantering vamp as Ritz implored an absent lover: *Take me like a storm/Hold me in your eye.* On the last line, she seemed to have a change of heart: *Don't let me slow you down,* Ritz whispered.

Such lines lend character to DRMS, allowing it to bring a hip sensibility to music that bears a remarkable level of scholarship. Launched roughly a year ago, it's given Shelton a small star turn on college radio while rendering Ritz a reluctant diva. The two of them met at local open mics and began collaborating in 2008, but only recently found a meeting point for both their artistic strengths. Their band combines influences from jazz, world, melodic rock, and even Afro-pop, a mix that sounds frightening on paper but works well when paired with Ritz' lushly textured vocals. Shelton's crowning achievement is that he manages to make complex music sound like conventional indie pop. He seemed embarrassed when asked to list all the instruments he deploys onstage. "Totally ridiculous when you write it out," Shelton wrote in an email, with a self-effacing smiley face.

Ridiculous or not, DRMS has cultivated a fanbase, hitting number seven on KALX 90.7 FM's chart, and playing a spate of high-profile shows — the February gig was part of this year's Noise Pop festival, and the band held its June album-release party at the Rickshaw Stop. DRMS' self-titled debut comprises ten trim, moody rock ballads whose addictive melodies belie their baroque orchestration.

In truth, both Ritz and Shelton have the credentials to make art music for the masses, namely because they both went to art school. Ritz grew up in upstate New York and studied painting and filmmaking at California College of the Arts. Shelton, who was raised in Menlo Park, earned his music degree at Hampshire College in Massachusetts — which he describes as one of those hippie, grade-less, "create-your-own-major" kind of schools. He took a three-hour lecture course with Yusef Lateef every Monday morning, during which students would call out shapes and the jazzman would "play" them on his saxophone. After that, he said, almost all of his compositions had jazz chord patterns and improvisational elements, even if they weren't "jazz" in the strict sense. He spent four months in Peru before joining forces with Ritz, and brought back a variety of folklore instruments to foist on her. On the album, Ritz drums a *quijada de burro* (the jaw bone of a donkey) and clicks a pair of snail shells procured from the jungle in Ecuador.

Ostensibly, Ritz is more the self-taught dabbler and Shelton the trained musician, since she learned to sing by listening to Billie Holiday records and he took lessons for years. But they're equally important to the band's aesthetic. Ritz has one of those breathy, girly voices that have become prevalent in the indie pop world — her most obvious antecedents are Holiday, Fiona Apple, and Joanna Newsom. Shelton composes all the music and nearly all the lyrics, many of which are filched from his diaries. Much of the material on DRMS's first LP is stuff he'd written years ago, which is why they're steeped in a young man's pathos (sample line: *Like a dog, wet from rain/Things just as they are, I'm coming back your way*). He met Ritz through the local open mic scene when they were about 25 and 20, respectively (they're now 29 and 24), and thought she had the right voice for his music.

The best thing about it, he said, is that it's not obviously beautiful. "You have to decide whether you like it or not," Shelton said. "A lot of my friends' parents who grew up in the Sixties don't like her voice, and I really love the fact that they don't like her voice." Ritz is concerned that her warbly vocal intonations might seem like an odd thing to drape over Shelton's pretty, heavily detailed music. But she's also conscious of it being the main thing. "The Billie Holiday thing makes sense to me because she's an influence," she explained, phoning from a house in Bolinas where she's recording with her other band Yesway. "I definitely think my voice is weirder and it's not as beautiful, or something."

Her fans would probably demur. ●

Rachel.Swan@EastBayExpress.com

Show Details

At de Young Museum (50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Dr., San Francisco) on Friday, Aug. 31, 6:30 p.m., free. DeYoung.FAMSF.org

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An addictive love song, a Coltrane resurrection, and a collection of old rarities.

Birds & Batteries

Stray Light

It's probably no coincidence that Birds & Batteries' fourth studio album dropped at the height of summer, but it's still a stroke of genius, especially for a San Francisco band. This is a record made of sun and fog in the same proportion: all bright Eighties hooks and chilly synths, poppier than the band's previous albums but still steeped in that strange cocktail of classic Americana and metallic electro, perfect for a winding drive along the coast or a drizzly barbecue.

It's a hard line to toe, this dynamic, and it doesn't always work on *Stray Light*, but when it does, it really, really does. Third track "Love Is Coming Back" is a dizzy, drifting, spellbinding love song that starts with a chorus of handclaps and a doleful, drawn-out synth line, slowly layers in Mike Sempert's sweetly understated vocals, and then glides gracefully into a sparkling, jubilant chillwave-meets-marching band climax before ending way, way sooner than you want it to. When Sempert promises, a couple lines in, that *the best things haven't happened yet*, you know he's right.

The rest of the album doesn't quite master this balance, this push-pull between folksy sentiment and inhuman instrumentation, and the second half of the record delves a bit too far into bleepy-bloopy melancholy and sterile, flat, indistinguishable electronic to be as enjoyable as the first. But man: "Love Is Coming Back." This is a song you'll keep coming back to over and over again, all fleeting and perfect and pure — a lot, in fact, like summer itself. (Eightempo)

— Ellen Cushing

Michael Pedicin

Live @ The Loft

Impulse! Records issued a two-disc album in 1975 titled *The Gentle Side of John Coltrane*. The focus was on the late Philadelphia-based tenor man's ballad playing, rather than on the more up-tempo, frequently fierce playing that made him so revered, as well as controversial, during his lifetime. Coltrane left an indelible mark on countless saxophonists, including Michael Pedicin. The Philadelphia-bred tenor man launched himself into the music business in the 1970s as a member of the horn section at the city's Sigma Sound Studios, where he recorded with the likes of The Spinners, The O'Jays, Lou Rawls, and David Bowie. He even had a minor R&B hit of his own in 1982 on the Philadelphia International label.

Coltrane's gentle side resonates through much of the music on Pedicin's latest CD, recorded in March at a club in Somers Point, New Jersey. The saxophonist's rhapsodic readings of two ballads once performed by Coltrane — Frank Loesser and Jimmy McHugh's "Say It (Over and Over Again)" and "I Want to Talk About You," a tune by vocalist Billy Eckstine that Coltrane famously recorded with Eckstine disciple Johnny Hartman — are absolutely gorgeous. He plays Coltrane's "Impressions" at a slower tempo than his hero had and takes Fred Lacey's ballad "Theme for Ernie" at a somewhat brighter clip than Coltrane did. The soulful, sometimes gentle set, on which Pedicin is empathetically supported by a swinging four-man rhythm section, also includes virtuoso treatments of Coltrane's "Like Sonny" and "Africa." (The Jazz Hut)

— Lee Hildebrand

At Yoshi's (1330 Fillmore St., San Francisco) on Tuesday, Aug. 21, 8 p.m. $8-$16. Yoshis.com

Nervebreakers

Hijack the Radio

Before The Clash and The B-52s inspired many youths to do it themselves, assorted small clusters of Seventies-era unsigned bands in the USA and UK shared one common characteristic: boredom and/or disgust with rock orthodoxy. Nervebreakers were one such combo, formed in the Dallas, Texas area circa 1975. Like The Ramones, they were inspired by the three-minutes-or-less leanness of mid-Sixties Top 40 and possessed a similarly cheeky, irreverent sense of humor. Nervebreakers got to open for The Ramones and The Sex Pistols at their Dallas performances in '77 and '78, respectively, and served as a backing band for madman Roky Erickson, former frontman of the Austin group 13th Floor Elevators.

Hijack the Radio collects singles, demos, and miscellaneous rarities recorded between 1975 and 1978. While some of this collection indeed sounds dated, it also sounds really swell. The genially snotty singing is endearingly flat and earnest, the tempos upbeat, the guitar solos brief and fast, the lyrics full of wit and knee-high nihilism. "My Girlfriend is a Rock" is a dandy bit of churlish whimsical (rhyming "alabaster" with "ask her") punk pop evoking the Buzzcocks' earliest — it was even something of a radio favorite in San Francisco, and wound up getting covered by L.A.'s Angry Samoans. "Everything Right" is a smoldering chunk of adolescent angst evoking Alice Cooper's "Eighteen." "Miss Moses" is a fractured, angular instrumental that sounds like the band was trying to combine Blue Öyster Cult and Captain Beefheart's Magic Band. The heart-on-sleeve, rowdy, wistful "So Sorry" sounds much like The Replacements the year they formed ('79). Nervebreakers played with tuneful eagerness and commitment in their heyday, and it reverberates decades later. (Get Hip)

— Mark Keresman

Citizen Rhythm

Of the People, By the People, For the People

Smoothness might be a natural trait of the electric jazz guitar, so it's to be expected that a quartet led by guitarist Terrence Brewer would err on the light side of the jazz spectrum — and his new album of standards by Wayne Shorter, Chick Corea, McCoy Tyner, et al. is nothing if not breezy. (Strong Brew Music)

At The Jazzschool (2087 Addison St., Berkeley) on Saturday, Sept. 22. $15

Deerhoof

Breakup Song

Deerhoof's deep-seated commitment to inscrutable noise doesn't obviate occasional moments of earworm. Take "Flower," a surprisingly catchy funk jam on the band's eleventh LP. The melody is so sweet and cute that you can almost visualize a karaoke ball bouncing in the foreground. "The Trouble with Candyhands" is equally funky. (Polyvinyl Records)

At Slim's (333 11th St., San Francisco) on Monday, Oct. 1, 8 p.m., $18

Allen Clapp & His Orchestra

Mixed Greens

The word "orchestra" might be a misnomer in this case, since Allen Clapp's orchestrations include nary more than conventional rock instruments. A Cal alum and committed Lutheran, Clapp writes intentionally nostalgic music, all bubbly harmonies, uplifting lyrics, and major-key melodies. It's pretty cheesy, but that's clearly his sensibility. (Mystery Lawn Music)

At The Starry Plough (3101 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley) on Friday, Aug. 17, 9:30 p.m., $7-$12

Legs

Legs

Legs' entire discography consists of two self-titled EPs — that's as much as you need to know about the group's musical direction. It's actually the work of two garage-rock instrumentalists, Matt Sullivan and Jeffrey Harland, plus a bunch of hired guns who round out the band. Their songs are chirpy and unwaveringly simple, in a Seventies kinda way. (self-released) ●

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THU 8/16 8:00PM THE FASHION SLAVES THE PHOTO ATLAS
FRI 8/17 9:30PM THE ALLEN CLAPP ORCHESTRA THE BYE BYE BLACKBIRDS THE HOLLYHOCKS DJ RUBBERBAND GIRL
SAT 8/18 9:30PM SPIRITS OF THE RED CITY MURALISMO ANTHONY FERRARO
SUN 8/19 3-7PM ALL AGES BONNIE & THE BANG BANG MY GRAVEYARD JAW BRIAN BELKNAP
THU 8/23 8:00PM HOTEL EDEN IN LETTER FORM PRETTYHIDEOUS
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CONCERTS & CLUBS

THURSDAY 16

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk, & Country

Diana Krall Mountain Winery, 7:30 p.m. $57.50-$129.50

Joe [illegible] with Tom [illegible], Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse. 8 p.m., $18.50, $22.50

Johnny Otis & The Highway Kind with [illegible] and Shelby Cobra, The Uptown. 8 p.m. $12

Road [illegible] and the [illegible] with [illegible], The New Parish. 8 p.m. $15

Steve [illegible] Cafe Van Kleef. 8 p.m., $5

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

The [illegible] Trio featuring [illegible] with Kenny Washington, Yoshi's Oakland. 8 p.m. $18

[illegible] Ashkenaz. 8 p.m., $10

[illegible] dinner jazz with guest [illegible] singers. The Alley. 8 p.m. free

[illegible] and [illegible] Quinn's Lighthouse. 8 p.m. free

Twilight by the Lake with [illegible], The Cathedral of Christ the Light. 5-7:30 p.m. free

Rock & Pop

Stone Rock XIII with [illegible], Mötley Crüe and The Insanes, Sleep Train Pavilion. 7 p.m. $55-$140

[illegible] in The [illegible] with The Soft White Sixties, University of California Botanical Garden. 5:30-7:30 p.m. $5-$12. Kids under 5 free.

DJ [illegible] [illegible], Yoshi's. 5 p.m. free

Emily [illegible] with American Nomad, The 25th Street Collective. 8 p.m. free

The [illegible] with [illegible], Mind's Eye, [illegible], and the [illegible], Stork Club. 9:30 p.m. $8

Love [illegible] with The [illegible], [illegible] High Club. 6-10:30 p.m. $7/$4

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Agape Soul [illegible]. 8 p.m., $5

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

[illegible] de la Paloma La Peña Cultural Center. 8 p.m. $10-$15

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk, & Country

Gospel [illegible] with Spirits of The Red City and Suzanne Vallie, Slims [illegible]. 9 p.m. $10

Dr. John and The Lower 911 featuring Jon Cleary and DJ Marty Duncan, The Independent. Aug. 15-17. 9 p.m. $39.50

[illegible] and [illegible] Country [illegible] Atlas Cafe. 8-10 p.m. free

[illegible] [illegible] Tavern. 8 p.m., $5

[illegible] Theater. & Blues. 8 & 10 p.m. $23

Experimental & Avant Garde

[illegible] with Magic Touch, [illegible], [illegible], and [illegible], Public Works. 9 p.m. $5, $10

[illegible] with [illegible] Great American Music Hall. Aug. 16-17. 8 p.m., $25

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Trio live jazz, [illegible]. 7:30 p.m. free

[illegible] with guests, Yoshi's San Francisco. 8 p.m. free

The [illegible] La Colonial. 7-10 p.m. free

Rock & Pop

Alejandro [illegible] with Jenny [illegible], Bimbo's 365 Club. 5 p.m., $35

Church [illegible] with The Neighbourhood and [illegible], [illegible]. 9:30 p.m., $12, $15

Cherry Poppin' Daddies Yoshi's San Francisco. 5 p.m. $22

Life Love Misery with [illegible] Johnson, [illegible], Red Devil Lounge. 8 p.m. $8-$10

The [illegible] with [illegible] and Big Frog, [illegible]. 9 p.m., $7

[illegible] with [illegible] and The Dirty Hand Family Band, Boxers of the Hill. 9 p.m. $10

[illegible] with The Northwise and The Country [illegible], [illegible]. 9 p.m. $6

Steve [illegible] with Martin [illegible], Cafe du Nord. 8:30 p.m. $15

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] with full live band, plus support TBA, Mezzanine. 9 p.m., $20

Stompy Stone playing "Central Avenue" inspired R&B, Top of the Mark. 7:30-11:30 p.m. $10

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

[illegible] [illegible]. 8:30 p.m. free

FRIDAY 17

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk, & Country

Annie [illegible] Cafe Van Kleef. 8 p.m., $8

[illegible] & The [illegible] Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse. 8 p.m. $22.50, $24.50

Jerry Jeff Walker [illegible] Theatre. 8 p.m. $34-$47

[illegible] the Towers with John Band covering Mark Knopfler, [illegible] Phillips (with [illegible]) covering [illegible], and Tom [illegible] covering [illegible]. [illegible], Ashkenaz. 9 p.m. $10-$15

Gospel & Vocal

"[illegible]" Gospel [illegible], plus rap, spoken-word, drama, vocalists, [illegible], & more, Bay Area Christian [illegible]. 7 p.m. free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

The [illegible] Quartet 57th Street Gallery. 8:30-11 p.m. $15

[illegible] Yoshi's Oakland. Aug. 17-18. 8 & 10 p.m. $35

Jazz [illegible] Intensive Concert with students performing alongside faculty [illegible], John [illegible], Jason Lewis and [illegible] guest guitarist [illegible] Johnson, [illegible]. 8 p.m. $10

[illegible] Jones Jazz Trio [illegible]. 9:30 p.m. free

Kat [illegible] playing keyboard grooves on the patio, Jupiter. 5-7 p.m. free

[illegible] [illegible] jazz with guest [illegible] singers, The Alley. 8 p.m. free

Rock & Pop

The [illegible] Orchestra with The [illegible], The [illegible], and [illegible], Stork Club. 9:30 p.m. $7-$12

[illegible] with [illegible] and Down [illegible], [illegible] High Club. 7 p.m. $7/$4

[illegible] with [illegible] Orchestra, [illegible], [illegible], Iron Mountain [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], Wake the [illegible], [illegible] of [illegible] and [illegible], Oakland Metro Operahouse. 8 p.m. $8

[illegible] with Spare Parts for Broken Hearts and [illegible], The [illegible]. 9 p.m. $10

[illegible] with My Autumn's [illegible], [illegible] Cafe. 7:30 p.m. free

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Saturday, October 6

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Wednesday, October 10

MARCUS MILLER
Thursday, October 11

DANILO PÉREZ TRIO
Sunday, October 14

JERRY & ANDY GONZALEZ, ELIO VILLAFRANCA, ARTURO STABLE
Thursday, October 18

ELIANE ELIAS
Friday, October 19

MARC RIBOT & DAVID HIDALGO
Wednesday, October 24

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Friday, October 26

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GRÉGOIRE MARET QUARTET
Sunday, October 28

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Friday, November 2

ORQUESTA ARAGÓN
Sunday, November 4

LAVAY SMITH & HER RED HOT SKILLET LICKERS SWINGIN' THE BLUES: THE KANSAS CITY SOUND
Saturday, November 10

BUIKA
Friday, November 16

DORADO SCHMITT AND THE DJANGO ALL STARS
Saturday, November 17

JOHN MEDESKI, SOLO
Sunday, November 18

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GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN
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FRI 8/17 9:30 pm $13 REGGAE/CARIBBEAN/FUNK MYSTIC MAN & LAKAY + THE FUNKANAUTS
SAT 8/18 9:00 pm $12 KALX PRESENTS THE FUNK ARK + BASS CULTURE
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TUE 8/21 8:30 pm $10 CAJUN/ZYDECO/BLUES TOM RIGNEY & FLAMBEAU 8 pm Cajun/Zydeco dance lesson
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PICKS

Wild Hunt

The Bay Area metal scene may not be producing any mega-big bands as of late, but there are a ton of underground acts making waves, and they're doing so largely by incorporating all kinds of different sounds and influences into the heavy music template. Oakland's Wild Hunt is one of these — a black metal-influenced prog metal band that's been around since 2004, but just released its debut full-length, *Before the Plane of Angles*, on New York-based Nomadic Records this year. Considering that three of four members also play in the thrash-prog-experimental metal band Dimsland, and one also dabbles in electropop funk-pop with The Soups, it's easier to understand the band's nontraditional (melodically and structurally) sound — and also why it seems to gel so naturally. It's a compelling, at times triumphant, debut, one that reflects a clearly thought-out (and well-executed) vision. At Oakland Metro (630 3rd St., Oakland) on Tuesday, Aug. 21, with Kayo Dot, Hollow Mirrors, Marching Mind, and Abstracter. 8 p.m. $8. OaklandMetro.org — *Kathleen Richards*

Nicki Bluhm

Nicki Bluhm and the Gramblers

Of all the artists pushing Seventies nostalgia — the shaggy long hair, the jangly instrumentation, the plaintive gazes, and the matte photographs — Nicki Bluhm makes the form seem entirely earnest. Bluhm isn't a retro artist, but her country ballads recall an earlier era, with their piano fills and lushly layered background vocals. Her voice is a high, bending alto, always pleasant, if a little light for lyrics about personal tragedy — her song "Woman's Prison" sounds more like a made-up yarn than a first-person testimonial. But many of Bluhm's lines are quaintly archaic and quite wonderful — she sings about being "pie-eyed stoned" on "Barbary Blues," for example. Not to mention her compositions are airtight, abetted by husband/producer/occasional backup singer Tim Bluhm (of The Mother Hips) and a crackerjack three-piece rhythm section. The Gramblers feature guitarist Dave Mulligan, bassist Steve Adams, and drummer Mike Curry. They'll perform at The New Parish (579 18th St., Oakland) on Thursday, Aug. 16, 8 p.m., $15. TheNewParish.com — *Rachel Swan*

Wild Hunt

Deadfest

Gregg "Deadface," a member of local punk bands War Trash and Your Enemy, admits he has a hard time saying "no." That could explain how the Rhode Island native ended up booking a punk music festival with 50 bands playing over 2 days. The second-annual Deadfest — a showcase of underground hardcore, doom, death metal, thrash, and any other dark or fierce punk-derived sub-genre you can name — has doubled in size from last year, and with bands scheduled to play in rapid-fire succession across four spaces on the floor of the Oakland Metro (630 3rd St., Oakland), the effect is likely to be a full-on ear-drum assault. If you missed it earlier this month, be sure to check out Portland-based band The Body on night one and local hardcore headliners Negative Standards on day two. If neither are your bag, there are fifty other bands that might be. On Friday, Aug. 17, 4 p.m., and Saturday, Aug. 18, 4 p.m., $8 each night. OaklandMetro.org — *Coone McFadden*

C&C

Station Lush with Steve Krause and Brian McCrary. High Street Station Cafe, 8 p.m. $12

The Mallard with Lili Ross and The Mirrors. 1-2-3-4 Go Records, 7:30 p.m. $5

Moonwalk Men with Caldecott Chords, Rose Carter, and Wild Tyme. Sarah Olsen, 8 p.m. $5

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Montice Jupiter, 8 p.m., free

WAR with Average White Band. Mountain Winery, 7:30 p.m. $45-$158

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Mystic Man & Lakay with The Funkanauts. Ashkenaz, 9:30 p.m. $10-$13

Saudade The New Parish, 9 p.m. $10-$15

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

Sister Heart's with Jugpunt Posters. Cafe du Nord, 8:30 p.m. $10

Dr. John and the Lower 911 featuring Jon Cleary and DJ Harry Duncan. The Independent, 9 p.m. $45-$50

Joyce Grant & Mookie Abertkonb. Zingari Ristorante, 8 p.m. midnight, free

Lacey Smith & Her Red Hot Skillet Lickers. Biscuits & Blues, 8 & 10 p.m. $20

Classical & Opera

San Francisco Choral Society presenting Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*. Davies Symphony Hall, Aug. 17-18, 8 p.m. $20-$34

Experimental & Avant Garde

Thebeautie with Amaora and The Moor Foreign. Hotel Utah, 8 p.m., $10

Twin Weeks with Records. Great American Music Hall, 8 p.m. $20

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Ana Moreiras Trio Free jazz. Ana Moreiras, 8-11:30 p.m., free

Black Market Jazz Orchestra Top of the Mark, 9 p.m.-12:30 a.m., $10

Dan Pratt's Sextet Ensemble Bell & Bucket Books and Records, 5:30-8 p.m., free

Eddie Pasternak Duo with guests. Yoshi's San Francisco, 8-9 p.m., free

The Jazz Crusaders featuring Joe Sample, Wayne Henderson, and Wilton Felder. Yoshi's San Francisco, Aug. 17-18, 8 & 10 p.m. $33-$80

Rock & Pop

Cobra Butters with Fucking Buckaroos, Beast Set, and Video. Thee Parkside, 9 p.m. $8

RJ Sabowski Solo rock piano. Madrone Art Bar, 6-9 p.m., free

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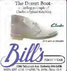
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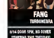

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[illegible] with [illegible] and [illegible], [illegible] Bar & Grill, 10 p.m., $5-$10

[illegible] with The [illegible], The [illegible], and [illegible], [illegible] Music Hall, 9 p.m. $6-$9

[illegible] [illegible] Civic Auditorium, Aug. 17-18, 1:30 p.m. $60

[illegible] [illegible] Films and [illegible], [illegible], 9:30 p.m., $8

[illegible] with [illegible] (Duran Duran tribute), [illegible] Club, Aug. 17-18, 9 p.m. $22

[illegible] with [illegible] and [illegible] Washington, [illegible], 10 p.m. $10

The [illegible]: Songwriter [illegible] with Kate [illegible], [illegible] and [illegible], [illegible], 7:30 p.m.-midnight, $5

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] with [illegible] and [illegible], [illegible], 9 p.m. $15

[illegible] [illegible], 8 p.m. $5-$10

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

[illegible] with [illegible], [illegible], 10 p.m., $15

SATURDAY 18

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] with Joy Kills Sorrow, Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse, 8 p.m. $20-$30 $22-$30

[illegible] High Street Station Cafe 7:30 p.m. $10

[illegible] with [illegible] and Anthony [illegible], Starry Plough, 5:30 p.m., $7-$12

Gospel & Vocal

[illegible] with [illegible], [illegible], 8 p.m. $10-$15

[illegible] with Kathy [illegible]: The Best of Broadway [illegible], 8-11 p.m. $20-$25

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Albatross Pub, 9:30 p.m. $2-$10 [illegible]

[illegible] Yoshi's Oakland, 8 & 10 p.m., $38

Jazz & Joy [illegible], 5:30 p.m. free

[illegible] [illegible], 8 p.m., free

[illegible] dinner jazz with [illegible] singers, The Alley, 7 p.m. free

[illegible] featuring [illegible] and Laurie [illegible], [illegible], 8 p.m., $12

[illegible] Quartet [illegible], 8 p.m.-midnight, Goodfoot accepted

Kids

Los Angelitos de La Peña Saturday morning children's show with live music, La Peña Cultural Center, 10:30 a.m., $6, $4 for under

Rock & Pop

Aloha Screwdriver The Fiesta Lounge 5 p.m., free

Goodfoot with [illegible], [illegible], Bloody Phoenix, [illegible], [illegible], Your Enemy, [illegible], [illegible], They are All Dead, [illegible], Cryptkeeper, [illegible], 4 p.m. $8

[illegible] with [illegible], and [illegible], [illegible] Club, 8 p.m. $5

Mrs. Magician with Legs and [illegible] TBA, The Uptown 9 p.m. $10

[illegible] Murphy The New Parish 5 p.m. $30-$35

[illegible] with The [illegible], [illegible], and [illegible], 924 Gilman, 8 p.m. $8

[illegible] Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists, 7:30 p.m., $10

ZZ Top Mountain Winery, 7:30 p.m. $50-$155

VENUE DIRECTORY

EAST BAY

[illegible] Street Art Gallery 5701 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

924 Gilman 924 Gilman St., Berkeley, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 492 9th St., Lower Patio, Oakland, [illegible]

Albatross Pub 1822 San Pablo Ave, Berkeley, 510-843-2473

The [illegible] 3329 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 2451 Telegraph Ave., [illegible]

[illegible] 717 [illegible] Ave, [illegible]

Art Room Gallery & [illegible] Center 2905 Shattuck Ave, Berkeley, 510-472-3170

Albatross [illegible] San Pablo Ave, Berkeley, 510-525-[illegible]

The [illegible] 136 Park Pl., Point Richmond, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 513 17th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Center for the Arts 1601 [illegible] St., Alameda, 510-523-[illegible]

The [illegible] 1001 B St., Hayward, 510-[illegible]

Cafe [illegible] 1621 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-763-7711

Caffe [illegible] 2500 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-[illegible]

[illegible] 1568 [illegible] St., Berkeley, 510-[illegible]

Club [illegible] 1220 Pine St., Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible]

Club 21 2111 Franklin St., Oakland, 510-268-9425

[illegible] 478 3rd St., [illegible], 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 3363 [illegible] Ave, Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 5422 College Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 1524 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible]

[illegible] 341 14th St., [illegible]

[illegible] 2306 Alameda Ave., Alameda, [illegible]

[illegible] 1755 [illegible] Ave, Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] King Jr. Way, Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] Ave, Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 126 Broadway, [illegible]

First Congregational Church 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley, 510-848-3696

First Presbyterian Church 2619 Broadway, [illegible] 510-444-3555

Fox Theater 1807 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 101 W. [illegible] Rd., Hayward, 510-[illegible]

Freight & Salvage 2020 Addison St., Berkeley, 510-644-2020

[illegible] Hall UC Berkeley, Bancroft Way at College Ave., Berkeley, 510-642-[illegible]

High Street Station 1303 High St., Alameda, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 1430 [illegible] St., Alameda, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 2087 Addison St., Berkeley, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Community Center of the East Bay 1414 Walnut St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

John Patrick's 1813 Park St., Alameda, 510-[illegible]

Julie's [illegible] 1223 Park St., Alameda, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 2181 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 1408 [illegible] St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 522 2nd St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 3332 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 858 San Pablo Ave., Albany, 510-[illegible]

La Peña Cultural Center 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-849-2568

[illegible] Methodist Church 3330 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Church 3534 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 530 Fallon St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

The [illegible] 1511 Franklin St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Lounge 2321 Santa Clara Ave., Alameda, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 3411 MacArthur Blvd, [illegible]

Luka's Taproom & [illegible] 2221 Broadway, Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Sports Bar & Grill 2771 N. Main St., Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible]

[illegible] 341 13th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

Mills College 5000 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 2097 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible]

The New Parish 579 18th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 6508 [illegible] Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

Oakland City Center 500 12th St., [illegible]

[illegible] 630 3rd St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

ORACLE Arena 7000 Coliseum Way, Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Lounge 2222 Telegraph Ave., [illegible]

[illegible] Theatre 2025 Broadway, Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Center for the Arts 1651 Magnolia Ave., [illegible]

[illegible] Company 1720 San Pablo Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Lighthouse [illegible], [illegible], 510-[illegible]

Radio 435 13th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Works 2513 Blanding Ave., Alameda, 510-[illegible]

The [illegible] 1745 San Pablo Ave., [illegible]

[illegible] Church 3655 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-[illegible]

[illegible] Restaurant 3709 [illegible] Ave., [illegible], 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 132 14th St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 4201 [illegible] Rd., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 2284 [illegible] Ave., [illegible], 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 2401 San Ramon Valley Blvd., [illegible], San Ramon, 925-[illegible]

Shoreline Amphitheatre One Amphitheatre Pkwy., Mountain View, [illegible]

[illegible] 2424 Lincoln Ave., Alameda, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Church 2580 N Main St., Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible]

St. Mark's Episcopal Church 2300 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, 510-[illegible]

St. John's Presbyterian Church 2727 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible]

Starry Plough 3101 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-841-2082

[illegible] Club 2530 Telegraph Ave., [illegible]

Studio 1310 [illegible] 4th St., Oakland, [illegible]

[illegible] Art House 2570 [illegible] Way, Berkeley, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 494 E. 14th St., San Leandro, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 1925 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] Grill 2045 Mt. [illegible] St., Concord, 925-[illegible]

Vitus 201 Broadway, Oakland, 510-452-[illegible]

[illegible] Vineyards Restaurant 5050 Arroyo Rd., Livermore, 925-[illegible]

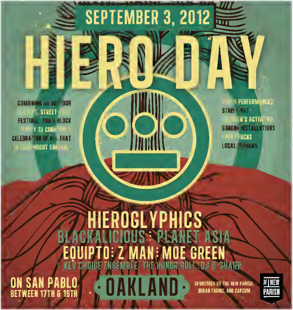
[illegible] Auditorium UC Berkeley, Berkeley, 510-642-[illegible]

White Horse Inn 6551 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

Yoshi's 510 Embarcadero West, Oakland, 510-238-9200

Zellerbach Hall UC Berkeley, Berkeley, 510-642-[illegible]

[illegible] 532 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]



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DJ Bail 4 Dorsey's Locker, 8 p.m. free

The Blob Ark with Blob Culture, Ashkenaz, 9 p.m. $12-$17

Mel Nestein Revolution, 9 p.m., $5

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Jesus del Bonavez with Conchita Vargas, La Peña Cultural Center, 8 p.m. $20-$50

Balkatrese Allegro Ashkenaz, 8:30 p.m., $15

Summer Beats Summer Series with Agogodo & Carcland Diamond South Shore Center, 5-8 p.m., free

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk, & Country

Blondie Cool Dogpatch Saloon, 9-11 p.m. free

Guitar Slingers and Bones Slingers a blues review with Volker Strifler, Terry Hiatt, Tia Carroll, Dave Hardeman, Cathy Lemons, Walt Eskart, Larry Vann, Paul Bryant, and Bones Jewett, Great American Music Hall, 8 p.m. $13

Maestrals of Lounge Italian folk music with Shan Magrano, Caffe Bonne, 10:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m., free

My Graveyard Jaw with Bonus Royale, Bender's Bar & Grill, 10 p.m. $5

The Sam Flawth with The Cuss and Aegu's Pale Blue Eyes, Hotel Utah, 8 p.m., $8

Classical & Opera

San Francisco Choral Society presenting Carl Orff's Carmina Burana, Davies Symphony Hall, 8 p.m. $18-$34

SF Merola Opera Program [illegible] grand finale concert, War Memorial Opera House, 7:30 p.m., $15-$50

Experimental & Avant Garde

Midnight Reach with Ben Jeveny and Brother Sabe, Movies by Ara Burton and Andy Yague, Mindless Book, 10 p.m., $10-$15

Gospel & Vocal

Sweet Baby J'ai Blondie's Room 4-4:30 p.m. $20

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Ana Mindeau Trio live jazz, Ana Mindeau, 4-11:30 p.m. free

Eddie Patterson Duo with guests, Yoshi's San Francisco, 6-9 p.m., free

The Jazz Crusaders featuring Joe Sample, Wayne Henderson, and Wilton Felder, Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 & 10 p.m., $30-$40

Rock & Pop

San Mateo San Francisco Summerfest with Spindrift, Electric Flower Group, Outlaw Mr. Elevator & The Brain Hotel, Dome Wood, Plant Tribe, Electric Shepherd, Zodiac Room Valley, The Lotus Moons, The Love Dimension, Dome for Carl Sagan, The Town Dirty Snake, The SPRR and The Spiral Electric, Thee Parkside, 3 p.m., $15

3 Mile Pilot with Dramady, Dreamer of the Hill, 9 p.m. $18-$20

Unknown Sheeps with Harms and Guitar Magazine, Hemlock Tavern, 4 p.m., $5

Blob Bomb & The Blob Ride Flow The Papaya, 9:30 p.m. free

Blob Spoil with Ancient Friend, Swingtime and DJ and Everything, El Rio, 8 p.m., $8

Permanent Collection with The Soldier Concert and Love Cuts, Concert Tavern, 8:30 p.m. $7

Phish Bill Graham Civic Auditorium 7:30 p.m. $60

Phish (Live Webcast) from the sold-out Bill Graham Civic Auditorium show, Brick & Mortar Music Hall, 7-11:30 p.m., free

The Bands of Light Wilderness with Caverns & Clouds and Black Cobra Vipers, Slim's, 4:30 p.m. $10-$13

Independent Music Benefit Concert and CD Release Party with Ed Champion, Ray Bonner & Friends, Tony Lindsey, The Hammond Sharp Crew, One Night Stands and more, The Regency Ballroom, 7 p.m. $25-$150

Super Diamond with Duran Duran Duran (Duran Duran tribute), Bimbo's 365 Club, 8 p.m. $22

[illegible] Blob & [illegible] Hall, 11 a.m., $5-$10

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Lee Fields & The Expressions with Black French and Hot Cat 4 Miles Ahead, The Independent, 9 p.m. $25

Saturday Night Soul Party with DJs Lucky, Paul Paul, and Phengren Oswald spinning '60s Soul 45's, Elbo Room, 10 p.m., $5-$10

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Los Cojolites Brava Theater Center, 4 p.m., $15-$20

Barrio with full live [illegible] plus [illegible], Bar Cuervo G, [illegible], 8 p.m., $10-$40

SUNDAY 19

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

All My Pretty Ones Subterranean Arthouse, 7 p.m. $10-$14

Americana Unplugged with Moonshine Bluegrass Band, Jupiter, 4 p.m. free

[illegible] with [illegible], Plough, 4 p.m. $6-$12

[illegible] Gyro with Daniel Paige and Aaron Cohen, University of [illegible] Botanical Garden, 1-3 p.m., $5-$12, kids under 4 free

Morning Blends [illegible], 7 p.m., free

Sunday Morning Dance with Rev Booth, Caffe Mediterraneum, 10 a.m. free

West Coast Songwriters Competition Finals a professionally judged original songs, Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse, 8 p.m. $18.50-$22.50

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Brunch Jazz Brunch with rotating jazz musicians, [illegible] Cafe, 10-3 p.m. free

VENUE DIRECTORY

SAN FRANCISCO

1015 Folsom 1015 Folsom St., 415-431-1200
[illegible] 303 Harriet St., 415-364-3344
111 Minna Gallery 111 Minna St., 415-974-1719
222 Club 222 Hyde St., 415-440-0222
330 Ritch 330 Ritch St., 415-541-9574
[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-431-1200
Amnesia 853 Valencia St., 415-970-0012
Amoeba Music 1855 Haight St., 415-831-1200
[illegible] 1626 [illegible] St., 415-771-1500
[illegible] & Lounge 1 Tillman Pl., 415-362-4150
Bazaar Cafe 5927 California St., 415-831-5620
Beach Chalet 1000 Great Highway, 415-386-8439
[illegible] 2399 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
Bimbo's 365 Club 1025 Columbus Ave, 415-474-0365
[illegible] 401 Mason St., 415-292-2463
Boom Boom Room 1601 Fillmore St., 415-673-8000
Bottom of the Hill 1233 17th St., 415-621-4455
Brick & Mortar Music Hall 1710 Mission St., 415-800-8782
Bruno's 2389 Mission St., 415-643-5200
Cafe du Nord 2170 Market St., 415-861-5016
Cafe International 508 Haight St., 415-552-7390
Caffe Trieste 609 Vallejo St., 415-982-2604
Cat Club 1190 Folsom St., 415-431-3332
Cellar 685 Sutter St., 415-441-5678
[illegible] 423 [illegible] St., 415-834-3780
Club Fugazi 678 Green St., 415-421-4222
Club Six 60 Sixth St., 415-863-1221
Davies Symphony Hall 201 Van Ness Ave., 415-864-6000
DNA Lounge 375 11th St., 415-626-1409
Dogpatch Saloon 2496 3rd St., 415-643-8592
Edinburgh Castle 950 Geary St., 415-885-4074
El Rincon 2700 16th St., 415-437-9240
El Rio 3158 Mission St., 415-282-3325
Elbo Room 647 Valencia St., 415-552-7788
The EndUp 401 6th St., 415-646-0999
The Fillmore 1805 Geary Blvd., 415-346-6000
Great American Music Hall 859 O'Farrell St., 415-885-0750
Hemlock Tavern 1131 Polk St., 415-923-0923
Herbst Theatre 401 Van Ness Ave., 415-392-4400
Hotel Utah 500 4th St., 415-546-6300
The Independent 628 Divisadero St., 415-771-1421
Ireland's 32 Bar & Grill 3920 Geary Blvd., 415-386-6173
Johnny Foley's Irish House 243 O'Farrell St., 415-954-0777
Kimo's 1351 Polk St., 415-885-4535
The Knockout 3223 Mission St., 415-550-6994
[illegible] Lounge 500 [illegible] St., 415-248-0282
Make-Out Room 3225 22nd St., 415-647-2888
Mezzanine 444 Jessie St., 415-625-8880
Mighty 119 Utah St., 415-762-0151
Milk Bar 1840 Haight St., 415-387-6455
[illegible] 50 West Portal Ave., 415-664-2044
Noe Valley Ministry 1021 Sanchez St., 415-454-5238
Park Chalet Brewery 1000 Great Highway, 415-386-8439
[illegible] 1451 Powell St., 415-646-0084
Public Works 161 Erie St., 415-932-0955
Red Devil Lounge 1695 Polk St., 415-921-1695
The Regency Ballroom 1300 Van Ness Ave., 888-929-7549
Retox Lounge 628 20th St., 415-626-1388
Rickshaw Stop 155 Fell St., 415-861-2011
Rockit Room 406 Clement St., 415-387-6344
Rrazz Room 222 Mason St., 415-394-1189
Ruby Skye 420 Mason St., 415-693-0777
San Francisco Conservatory of Music 50 Oak St., 415-503-6275
Skip's Tavern 453 Cortland Ave., 415-282-3456
Skylark 3089 16th St., 415-621-9294
Slim's 333 11th St., 415-522-0333
Som. Bar 2925 16th St., 415-558-8521
Space 550 550 Barneveld Ave., 415-550-8286
Stud Bar 399 9th St., 415-863-6623
Sub/Mission Art Space 2183 Mission St., 415-255-7227
SupperClub 657 Harrison St., 415-348-0900
Swig Bar 561 Geary St., 415-931-7292
[illegible] 545 [illegible] St., 415-978-9942
Thee Parkside 1600 17th St., 415-252-1330
Top of the Mark 999 California St., 415-616-6916
Tunnel Top 601 Bush St., 415-986-8900
Velvet Lounge 443 Broadway St., 415-788-0228
The Warfield 982 Market St., 415-775-7722
Yoshi's San Francisco 1330 Fillmore St., 415-655-5600

12
22
32
42
52
62
72
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Frances M. of South Carolina

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C&C

Eli Wallace jazz-inspired piano, [illegible] Cypress Café, 12:30 p.m., free
Ocelotlan Yoshi's Oakland, 6 & 8 p.m., $20
The "In the Tradition" Vinnie Trio Lincoln Court Senior Apartments, 3 p.m., $10
Jazz and R&B Night Dunsey's Locker, 6-10 p.m., free
Jim Stevenson Jazz Quintet classic & contemporary jazz, Coffee Mill, 3-6 p.m., free
John Schott Actual Café, 5 p.m., free
The Randy Mason Trio Nick's Lounge, 6:30-9:30 p.m., free
Rudy Salcido Big Band Alameda Elks Lodge Rathskeller, 5-8 p.m., $20, Friends $15

Rock & Pop

Iron Pinot with Elegy, Skull and Bullets, and [illegible] Death Pile Theater, [illegible] Mile High Club, 8 p.m., $TBA
Nashville Pussy with Fang and Turbonegro, The Uptown, 8 p.m., $12-$15
[illegible] Earth Policy with Grandma (King Diamond tribute band) and The King Mob, The Stork Club, 4 p.m., $6
[illegible] with Head Casket and [illegible], The Uptown, 4:5 p.m., $7
Friends Love Golden Gate Fields, 1-5 p.m., $1

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Bobbie Gee with a screening of the documentary The Last [illegible], [illegible], 4:30 p.m., $5-$10
Domingo de Salsa Afro-Cuban rumba jam session & dance party, Café Valparaiso, 3:30-8:30 p.m., free

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk, & Country

Parlor Tricks with The [illegible] and The [illegible] & Show, Brick & Mortar Music Hall, 8 p.m., $5-$6
Songwriter Sundays rotating artists perform in the lounge, Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 p.m.-midnight, $3
Terry [illegible] Johnny Foley's Irish House, 9 p.m., free

Classical & Opera

Michael Kusuda on piano for Sarsgate champagne brunch, Top of the Mark, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., $45-75 for brunch plus gratuity and tax
Stern Grove Festival soprano Leah Crocetto and tenor Michael Fabiano perform a [illegible] of opera, Stern Grove, 2 p.m., free
Summer Nights featuring pianist and vocalist [illegible], Davies Symphony Hall, 8 p.m., $85-$125

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

The Jazz Showcase featuring Joe Sangiorgio, Wayne Henderson, and Wilson Folder Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 & 8 p.m., $30-$40
Vince Lateano & Friends featuring Andrew Speight, [illegible], [illegible], 4:30-8:30 p.m., $6

Rock & Pop

Braid with Stars and Ts & The Past Friends [illegible], 8 p.m., $22
Cryptobloom with [illegible] and [illegible], Hemlock Tavern, 8 p.m., $6
Indie Heart with Keith [illegible], Heroes, SF Noah Project, [illegible] and Meat Market, Thee Parkside, $2-7, 8 p.m., free
Phish Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, 7:30 p.m., $50
The [illegible] with The Man, Nelson Ford and Secret Suspenders, Hotel Utah, 8 p.m., $5

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Ghiddy Dong The Independent, 9 p.m., $20

MONDAY 20

EAST BAY

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Calvin Keys 57th Street Gallery, 7 p.m., $5-$10
[illegible] Yoshi's Oakland, 8 p.m., $18
[illegible] with Pat Molan and her jazz quartet, Kensington Library, 7-8 p.m., free

SAN FRANCISCO

Experimental & Avant-Garde

The Music of Changes: [illegible] a yearlong series celebrating John Cage's centennial, Old First Presbyterian Church, 8 p.m., $14-$17

Rock & Pop

[illegible] with [illegible] and [illegible], [illegible], 8 p.m., $6
Polica with Supreme Cuts, The Independent, 8 p.m., $15
[illegible]: The International [illegible] Show a 50th anniversary [illegible] show, Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 p.m., $7.50-$15

TUESDAY 21

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk, & Country

[illegible] Peter's Restaurant, 7:30-9 p.m., free
Sam Rigney & [illegible] Ashkenaz, 8:30 p.m., $10
Tuesday Night Live Music This week: [illegible] Big Band, Jake's Coffee & Tea Garden, 7 p.m., $5 suggested

Experimental & Avant-Garde

[illegible] with Hollow Station, Wild Hunt, [illegible] and [illegible], Metro Operahouse, 8 p.m., $6

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Eddie Pasternak Duo with [illegible], Café Rouge, 6:30 p.m., free
[illegible] Collection [illegible], 8 p.m., free
[illegible] treble jazz with guest [illegible] singers, The Alley, 8 p.m., free

Rock & Pop

[illegible] Club with Natives, [illegible], and Laurel Canyon, Stork Club, 9 p.m., $5

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] Jupiter, 8 p.m., free

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Afia Yoshi's Oakland, 8 p.m., $16

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk, & Country

Lightnin' Malcolm Biscuits & Blues, 8 & 10 p.m., $15
Sarah Lee Guthrie with Melody Walker and The [illegible], [illegible], 9 p.m., $6

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] with [illegible] and Whitney Nichols, Brick & Mortar Music Hall, 9 p.m., $5-$8
The Michael Pedicin Sextet featuring [illegible], Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 p.m., $8-$16

Rock & Pop

Acoustic Tuesday Local Songwriter Showcase with [illegible], Josh Staples, and [illegible], Bottom of the Hill, 9 p.m., $9
Battalion of Saints with 13 Bones, The [illegible] Bunch, Bent City Saints, and [illegible], [illegible], 8 p.m., $8
[illegible] with Emily Jane White and Night Hikes, Hemlock Tavern, 9 p.m., $8
[illegible] Park Chalet Brewery, 6:30 p.m., free
[illegible] with [illegible], The Independent, 8 p.m., $12-$14

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] with Mad Hour and [illegible], [illegible], 7 p.m., $5

Montoya plays Lupine on 8/17

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EAST BAY EXPRESS

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WEDNESDAY 22

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

The Bells with Chelsea Coleman, Funk Haunt Gang, and Spirits Tree, Irish Club, 8 p.m., $5

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Bob Fons & the Sound Gnus Roosters RoadHouse, 8:30 p.m., free
Kurt Mbak Trio original jazz, Cato's Ale House, 6-9 p.m., free
Kim Jazz Townhouse Bar & Grill, 7:30 p.m., free
and to Lunch Saturn Cafe, 8 p.m., free
Rod Dibble dinner jazz with guest cabaret singers, The Alley, 8 p.m., free

Rock & Pop

Collide Collfot and Gavin DeGraw Mountain Winery, 7:30 p.m., $49.50-$79.50

Eric Johnson Band Yoshi's Oakland, Aug. 22-23, 8 p.m., $30
Jello Biafra and the Guantanamo School of Medicine with La Plebe, Oakland Metro Operahouse, 8 p.m., $20
BALK 90.7 FM Presents: Big This! weekly band showcase. this week featuring Terrible Nightmares and Daydreams, and High Desert, The Uptown, 8:30 p.m., free
Pat Travers with LeNaps, The New Parish, 8 p.m., $20-$28
Thousand with Boats! and Host Bays, Bill's Mile High Club, 8 p.m., $5
Very Jerry A Jerry Garcia tribute with David Nelson Band and Jean Gadoheus-Woodley, Henry Kaiser, Stu Allen, and Aenear Achimmer, 8:30 p.m., $10-$15

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Caribbean Night with Reggae Flash and DJ Mandrik, Dorsey's Locker, 7:30 p.m., free
Flamenco Tournament with singer Roberto Zamora, guitarist Travis McLean, and dancers Clara Rodriguez and Stephanie Ramirez, Dns.a Volante, 8 p.m., $7
La Clave del Sauret with live salsa and dance entered, Shadiah Renee Lou, 8 p.m., $5, $10

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk, & Country

Kenny Neal Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 p.m., $15
Ocha la Rocha/Sweet Chariot with The Salt Bombs, Johnny Hous, and guest DJ, Brick & Mortar Music Hall, 9 p.m., $8-$10

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Obst.Broth with Cesette and Eric Garland, Le Sweden, Amapola, 7 p.m., free
Mimmie Sound playing Mount jazz jams, Top of the Mark, 8:30-11:30 p.m., $5

Rock & Pop

Commitment with Youthie Dip-in-the-Desert, DNA, 9 p.m., $5
Lily Holbrook with Steve Reid, The Verb-around, and Revolutionary Hotel Utah, 8 p.m., $7
Nobunny with Apache Dropout and Kurst Gran, Hemlock Tavern, 8 p.m., $10
Pine with Band Reform and Lady Stardust Colloquium, Sisty Stardust (cover band), Bottom of the Hill, 9 p.m., $8

Submissions for music listings should be emailed to Clubs@EastBayExpress.com or mailed to Clubs Editor, East Bay Express, 620 3rd St., Oakland, CA, 94607. Deadline is fourteen days prior to the event date.

Jello Biafra and the Guantanamo School of Medicine play the Oakland Metro [illegible]

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THE IGUANAS
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FRI AUG 24 · $15 ADV/$15 DOOR · DOORS 8, SHOW 9
THE MERMEN
RED MEAT

SAT AUG 25 · $15 ADV/$15 DOOR · DOORS 8, SHOW 9
THE GOOD LUCK THRIFT STORE OUTFIT
THE TRESPASSERS
THE HARMED BROTHERS

WED AUG 29 · $20 ADV/$22 DOOR · DOORS 7:30, SHOW 8
[illegible]
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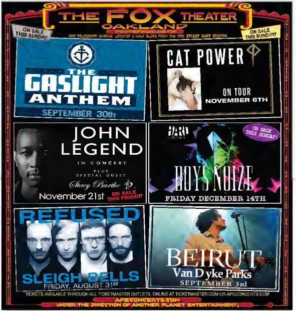

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MESTIZA

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SUN 8/19

TUESDAY JAZZIDENCY:
HERMANN LARA'S
ORGANOMIX
TUE 8/21

DJ & DANCE

EAST BAY

THURSDAY 16

Academy Night w/ DJ and VJ Joe G. spinning hip-hop, R&B, dancehall, & Top 40. White Horse Inn. 9 p.m. $3, students free w/ valid ID.

Body Language w/ Lee-T-Ament and Coco-G spinning '70s and '80s funk, pop, R&B and hip-hop. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 9 p.m. free.

Dub Fever w/ Deluxe Dub Sound spinning reggae & dancehall. Shashamane Restaurant. 10 p.m. free.

Dorothitas w/ DJs Kool Kyle and Chris Fox. Shattuck Down Low. 9 p.m., free.

Delicious Thursdays Radio. 10 p.m., free.

DJ AdiS spinning Rhythm and candy. King Man's Lucky Lounge. 9 p.m., free.

DJ Night DJs spinning funkadelic pop, mind-blowing rock, & urban hip-hop. Kip's Restaurant. 9:30 p.m. free.

DJ Trick spinning lounge. Last Weekend Lounge. 9 p.m.-2 a.m. free.

Deep Tea music w/ Salvatore Valero and Vladimir Explosion & Jay Sonic. The Layover. 10 p.m., free.

Riff Raff new soul mash-ups, new wave. Radio. 10 p.m.-2 a.m. free.

Karaoke, Rattle 'n' Roll featuring DJ Tando. Forbidden Island. 8 p.m. free.

SUPPORTgroup DJs Olut and HyFeFaFi spin an eclectic mix of funk, disco, house, and techno. Jupiter. 9 p.m.

Tasty ladies' night w/ DJ Mo Merithe, spinning hip-hop & R&B. Club 21. 9 p.m., $12-$15.

Ultra Wave DJs Faze, Sake One, and Willie Maze play dance music. Sonar Bar & Lounge. 9 p.m. free.

Uphill Thursdays w/ DJ Kal Ka and guests spinning roots reggae and dancehall. Connect's Club. 9 p.m.-2 a.m., $5.

Bar Dance Students featuring Tree Carlos Mena and Devil. Beach and Bar. 9 p.m. free.

FRIDAY 17

45 Invasion Pizza Violento. 9:30 p.m. $5.

Club 21 DJs spinning Latin beats. Club 21. 9 p.m. $8-$10.

spinning / DJ Ryan DJ Ryan spinning the hottest music in the Bay Area. White Horse Inn. 9 p.m. $5.

Deejays, Drinks & spinning w/ DJs spinning. Down Low. 9 p.m. free.

DJ Night DJs spinning funkadelic pop, mind-blowing rock, & urban hip-hop. Kip's Restaurant. 9:30 p.m. free.

Friday Night Salsa w/ guest DJs spinning salsa. La Estrellita Cafe. 10 p.m. $5.

Friday Nite Beats w/ DJ Supa K. Forbes. 10 p.m. $5.

Friday Bomb w/ DJ Golden Gram spinning punk, rock, bass, & noise rock. The Missouri Lounge. 6-10 p.m. free.

Hip-Hop Bomb Music w/ Naked DJ. Club 1220. 8 p.m. $6.

Latin Explosion DJ Jorge Salinas spins merengue, salsa, dominican, banda, Spanish pop, & house. Bench and Bar. 9 p.m.-2 a.m. $8-$15.

Mandala weekly in-house DJ bands. Ameoba Mode. 7:30 p.m. free.

Mighty Irie DJs Decker & Joe Trotz, and Ravens. One spin reggae, dancehall, and hip-hop. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 10 p.m. $5 bands, 11 p.m. $10 after.

Old-School hip-hop and funk. Hump. 9 p.m. free.

Unified Night w/ DJ Electro spinning reggae, soca, music & R&B. Paradise Club. 10 p.m. bands, free bands, 11:30 p.m.

Retro Retro beats, music music '80s pop night. Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 p.m. free.

Sultry Fridays DJ Lash & Fat Rob spin R&B & soul. Kimball's Carnival. 9 p.m. $5.

World Beat Fridays featuring DJ Tropic spinning afrobeat, soca, samba, cumbia, merengue, dancehall reggae, bhangra, Arabic beats, & more. Conga Lounge. 10 p.m.

SATURDAY 18

All Productions & Superstar Bee spinning R&B & hip-hop. Forbes. 10 p.m. free.

Low Mindset & DJs Joey Ross & Soul Profess spin R&B, soul, funk, reggae, & hip-hop. Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 p.m. $10.

Club Mindset w/ DJ Rush and guests spinning hip-hop & R&B. Bench and Bar. 9 p.m. $8 before 11 p.m.

Spinning Saturdays followed by hip-hop & house at midnight. Club 1220. 9:30 p.m. midnight. $5.

Dancehall Saturdays w/ Anton music spinning reggae, dancehall & hip-hop. The Avenue. 9 p.m. free.

DJ Night DJs spinning funkadelic pop, mind-blowing rock, & urban hip-hop. Kip's Restaurant. 9:30 p.m. free.

Jersey Dragon w/ Brenna and Emily spinning hip-hop, bass pop, punk, beats, & funk. The Annex Lounge. 10 p.m. free.

Superstar Saturday Night w/ DJ evil. White Horse Inn. 9 p.m. $5.

La Bota Bota Latino cowboy night w/ DJs spinning salsa, norteño & banda, plus live go-go showcase. Club 21. 9 p.m. $8-$15.

Magic Milk Karaoke DJ music & karaoke, live genre-surfing extravaganza. Ringman's Lucky Lounge. 9 p.m., free.

Reggae Night Conga Lounge. 10 p.m. free.

Rebound Saturdays rotating DJs spin classic hip-hop, neo soul, and world karaoke. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 10 p.m. $5 bands, 11 p.m. $10 after.

Karaoke DJ Kinsen spins mashups, funk, house, and soul, bands. Bar & Lounge. 9 p.m. $5.

Vinyl Baby! w/ DJ music Willie spinning punk, deathrock, synth punk, and '80s jams. Ruby music. 10 p.m.-2 a.m. free.

Warm-Up w/ DJ Wild Cut spinning hip-hop, R&B. The Wheeler Lounge. 6-10 p.m. free.

More Listings Online
Get info about hundreds of musical events
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or m.EastBayExpress.com

SUNDAY 19

The Break w/ Violento, samba Ray Chaise and DJ T. Sharp. Kay Art Bar and Lounge. 8 p.m. 1:30 a.m., free.

DJ Friday Ringman's Lucky Lounge. 9 p.m. free.

Ice Karaoke Sundays w/ Crown Rota DJs Hitter and Hello Good. Dragon Rouge. 2 p.m. free.

King of Kings Sparkle Dole and Ravens, the best roots rock, and reggae hardcore. Down Low. 10 p.m. $10.

music Sonic DJ Zodi spins deathrock, post-metal, punk, hardcore, sludge, shoegaze, and more. Ruby Room. 10 p.m. free.

Uncle Fee's Ska Sundays DJs spin ska, rocksteady, & roots reggae. The Kelly Tikey Club. 7 p.m. free.

MONDAY 20

Caribbean Nights w/ DJs Berg and Lukas Bench spinning world, reggae, Latin, and hip-hop. Sonar Bar & Lounge. 10 p.m. free.

Boss Kolorific w/ DJ Pillard. Pizza Violento. 8 p.m. free.

Three-Day Delicious DJ Prozack Turner spins local favorites. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 9 p.m. free.

Underground Lounge psyche '60s & prime '70s music. Radio. 10 p.m.-2 a.m., free.

Wanna Hang Out? w/ DJ B.Tal spinning rock and all soft hits, beats, & soul. The Missouri Lounge. 10 p.m., free.

TUESDAY 21

Country Music Night plus and spinning. Club 1220. 8 p.m. free.

DJ Night DJs spinning funkadelic pop, mind-blowing rock, & urban hip-hop. Kip's Restaurant. 9:30 p.m. free.

DJ Valentine The Layover. 10 p.m. free.

DJ Vlady spinning punk. Last Weekend Lounge. 9 p.m.-2 a.m. free.

Joe Quint Spins Vinyl music Ravens. 9 p.m. free.

Soul Fyah DJ Sean T and rotating guests spinning reggae, dancehall, and Ravens rhythms. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 9 p.m. free.

Stay Punk! w/ DJ hardcore spinning Oi!, punk, hardcore, & thrash. The Annex Lounge. 10 p.m. free.

WEDNESDAY 22

Hump Day w/ DJs Jet & Deb Harrison of Artikon. The Valento Lounge. 10 p.m.-2 a.m. free.

The Jet Mix w/ DJ Santoro and special guests. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 9 p.m. free.

The Jump Off: Hump Day Hip-Hop w/ DJs spinning hip-hop. Club 21. 9 p.m. $6-$15.

Knuckle Sandwich w/ DJ Fox Dog. The Layover. 8 p.m. free.

Percussion Latin cowboy night w/ Reed Violeta. Bench and Bar. 7 p.m. $8-$15.

Ravers resident DJs Soul Profess and Leydis and Lounge guests spin hip-hop, deep beats, broken beat, hardcore, Superstar reggae, and Goldfish rhythms. Sonar Bar & Lounge. 9 p.m., free.

Trainwreck! DJ Ravens, Trotz spins everything from soul and pop to punk rock from the '50s through the '90s. Merchant's Saloon. 10 p.m.-2 a.m. free.

PICK

Grooves in the Park

For Jayson Kincaid, Eric Groove, and Michael Caceam co-producing Grooves in the Park is an act of altruism. An old-school raver, Kincaid matriculated into Expression College for Digital Arts a few years ago, learned how to manhandle a mixing console for a big crowd, and quickly expanded his sphere of influence in the local house scene. He conceived Grooves in the Park as a "family-friendly" dance party for fans of house music, and ultimately turned the event into a recurring enterprise — earlier this year, he held one in his hometown of Stockton, and the next installment will happen at Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline Park (7250 Doolittle Dr., Oakland) on Saturday, Aug. 18. The DJ lineup looks sweet by house standards, with Kincaid and Caceam joined by Leonard of the now-defunct SOMA retailer In House Records, plus Cali of the perennially popular soul-house party The People. Groove will provide live percussion. 2 p.m., free. Facebook.com/DJKincaid — *Rachel Swan*

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AQUARIUM AGE

RELINQUISH CONTROL

For the week of August 15-21, 2012

By Ralfee Finn

This week, even the sharpest listeners among us might find it hard to hear the cosmic click over the din of terrestrial chatter. But a failure to notice what lies beneath the noise won't inhibit the planets from locking into the next phase of intensity. We're on the approach to the second exact Uranus/Pluto square on September 19, and as we move toward that marker, many of us will become increasingly aware of an ever-escalating tension that seems to pervade all areas of daily life. This mounting tension is an ongoing condition that continues to aggravate individual as well as collective situations, especially those in dire need of peaceful remedies and compassionate solutions.

The Mars/Saturn conjunction in Libra, is exact and separating on August 15. This conjunction officially ends when Mars moves into Scorpio on August 23. Whenever a powerful configuration separates, we tend to feel the full brunt of its force. A Mars/Saturn conjunction is characterized as a pernicious interaction that tends toward negativity or violence. Pay attention. This conjunction serves as a period at the end of an important planetary message about relationships. Before entering Libra, Mars gathered its strength for the six months through its retrograde in Virgo, the Sign where we recognize our fundamental interconnectedness. Mars moved into Libra on July 3, nine days after the first exact Uranus/Pluto square; it joined that configuration for the first two weeks of July, when it opposed Uranus and squared Pluto. Mars began separating out of that configuration on July 19, the day and night of the tragedy in Aurora, Colorado.

Saturn is the principle of discipline, but it is also the principle of loneliness and isolation. Mars symbolizes energy, specifically physical energy, which often manifests itself as aggression. Mars is the archetype of the warrior and signifies the male principle. The current Mars/Saturn conjunction has the potential to turn all sorts of interactions more than a little testy. At best, it is an opportunity to bring greater awareness to personal patterns of assertion and/or aggression with significant others, especially habitual reactions that may not accurately reflect your consciousness, intention or heart.

Currently in Cancer, Venus also plays a role this week, as she opposes Pluto and squares Uranus. In the western astrological system, Venus isn't typically associated with violence, but considering the stresses of the world, we're sure to feel her presence as part of the current unrest. Her effect could be felt in the financial realms, given that she symbolizes money, but from a personal perspective it might be wise to be prepared for declarations of divorce as well as passionate proposals — she is the goddess of love, after all. Remember: Venus spent the first two weeks of her recent retrograde in a trine to Saturn, a position that invited us to reflect on how we speak and deliver information to significant others, both personal and professional.

The din that rides the surface of these deep currents is a Mercury/Uranus trine, a positive combination that actively supports innovation and invention. This trine also feeds a need for almost constant information, so be careful not to let that hunger agitate your nervous system.

As the coming weeks unfold, the Uranus/Pluto square will tighten its position, a process that will only exacerbate existing stresses — physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual. Forewarned simply means better prepared for what lies ahead and, for those who wish to be of service to their fellow travelers, better able to reach out to those in distress with empathy and compassion.

If you know your Ascendant and/or your Moon Sign, read that too.

ARIES Reflect on your partnership patterns with an eye toward identifying what may be inhibiting beneficial reciprocity. There's nothing to do — just think about it.

TAURUS Gather the loose ends of projects and pay careful attention to previously overlooked details. You don't want to forget an important piece of the puzzle.

GEMINI Conversations run the gamut from the ridiculous to the sublime — but you don't mind because that range allows you to use your informational "super powers." Share the data joyously.

CANCER It is a deeply emotional moment, and there are no easy solutions that will satisfy everyone, so it's very important for you to stay calm and centered.

LEO Be realistic as well as optimistic as you identify what you need to create greater balance and joy in your life. Then create a strategy for actualizing your vision.

VIRGO The question of the week: What happens if you let go of your need to control the outcome? A possible answer: Things just might work out in your benefit.

LIBRA There's no need to let volatile interactions with significant others worsen. Put pride aside and concentrate on creating a win/win solution for everyone.

SCORPIO Don't waste your energy on negative thinking. Instead, channel your frustration into positive projects that will increase your sense of personal satisfaction.

SAGITTARIUS It doesn't matter what others think; what matters is that you have the courage to stand for what you believe in and to integrate those beliefs into action.

CAPRICORN If you can find a way to compromise on key issues, you'll have a much easier time managing the eccentric needs of significant others, personal and professional.

AQUARIUS You don't have to have all the answers. Just continue to be patient, and you'll continue to handle what might otherwise be a volatile situation with ease and skill.

PISCES Finding a still point in the midst of change requires determination, but it can be done, especially if you're willing to give up the need for a specific outcome. ●

For More Info

Ralfee Finn specializes in Transformational Astrology. For readings, call 1-888-537-9284, write P.O. Box 343, New York, NY 10025, visit AquariumAge.com, or e-mail Ralfee@AquariumAge.com. Copyright © 2012 by Ralfee Finn.

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ORDER OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF GEORGE A. CALDBOOR CASE NO. RP12641733

[illegible]

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed [illegible] in the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda. THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that [illegible]

THE PETITION requests [illegible]

A HEARING on the petition will be held on 8/22/2012 at 9:30 A.M. in Dept. 201 located at 2120 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. WAY BERKELEY CA 94704.

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, [illegible]

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, [illegible]

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. [illegible]

Attorney for Petitioner [illegible] Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda CA 94501

Telephone: 510-865-2924

8/1, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22/2012

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF LEO PAGANO CASE NO. RP12643376

[illegible]

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by [illegible] in the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda. THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that [illegible]

THE PETITION requests [illegible]

A HEARING on the petition will be held on 8/31/2012 at 9:30 A.M. in Dept. 201 located at 2120 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. WAY BERKELEY CA 94704.

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, [illegible]

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR [illegible]

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. [illegible]

Attorney for Petitioner [illegible] 730 Larkspur Landing Circle, Ste. 205 Larkspur, CA 94939

Telephone: [illegible]

8/8, 8/15, 8/22, 8/29/2012

Fictitious Business Name Statement File # [illegible]

[illegible]

8/1, 8/8, 8/15/2012

Fictitious Business Name Statement File # 467200

The following individual is doing business as **Solar Technologies** [illegible]

Solar Technologies

8/1, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22/2012

Fictitious Business Name Statement File # 461320

[illegible]

8/1, 8/8, 8/15/2012

Fictitious Business Name Statement File # 467484

[illegible]

8/15, 8/22, 8/29, 9/5/2012

Fictitious Business Name Statement File # 467032

[illegible]

8/1, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22/2012

Fictitious Business Name Statement File # 467080

The following individual is doing business as **Apple Pie Maternity and Kids** [illegible]

8/15, 8/22, 8/29, 9/5/2012

Fictitious Business Name Statement File # 467077

[illegible]

8/15, 8/22, 8/29, 9/5/2012

Fictitious Business Name Statement File # [illegible]

[illegible]

8/15, 8/22, 8/29, 9/5/2012

Fictitious Business Name Statement File # 466131

[illegible]

8/15, 8/22, 8/29, 9/5/2012

Fictitious Business Name Statement File # 466179

[illegible]

8/8, 8/15, 8/22, 8/29/2012

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: [illegible]

Superior Court of California, County of Alameda

1225 Fallon Street

Oakland, CA 94612

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: [illegible]

NOTICE OF HEARING [illegible]

8/8, 8/15, 8/22, 8/29/2012

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: [illegible]

[illegible]

8/1, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22/2012

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: RG12637741

[illegible]

8/8, 8/15, 8/22/2012

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: RG12637742

[illegible]

8/15, 8/22, 8/29/2012

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: RG12638644

[illegible]

7/25, 8/1, 8/8, 8/15/2012

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: RG12639643

[illegible]

8/8, 8/15, 8/22, 8/29/2012

Statement of Abandonment of Use of Fictitious Business Name Statement File # 467114

The following person has abandoned the use of the fictitious business name: [illegible]

8/1, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22/2012

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: [illegible]

[illegible]

8/15, 8/22, 8/29, 9/5/2012

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SAVAGE LOVE

TOUCHEO

By Tegan and Sara and by a finger

By Dan Savage

I've been confused about my sexuality for two years. I am a 22-year-old female. I liked guys when I was in school, but then, in perhaps the most stereotypical of fashions, I developed a HUGE crush on Tegan and Sara when I was nearly twenty. I like the idea of being with women, but I have never had a major crush on anyone since. So I'm really confused over what my sexual orientation actually is. I know many hetero-identifying people experience same-sex crushes, but can someone's whole sexual orientation just change overnight? My confusion is compounded by the fact that I've never even held someone's hand, been kissed, or done anything else. I really want to experience such things, have an awesome relationship, and generally just stop feeling like a complete loser. Any help appreciated!

Awfully Nervous Over Newness

"When I was young, I dated boys," said Tegan Quin, one half of the popular indie duo that prompted you to question your sexuality. "I never thought about love or being 'in love.' And I never thought about sexuality. I was lucky to have a group of friends much more interested in each other than dating. And so I was fairly untroubled about my status. Until I kissed a girl. Then I knew who I really was. I was gay."

Like you, ANON, Tegan used to assume she was straight. "I'd gone most of my teens crushing on guys like Jared Leto, thinking that must make me straight," said Tegan. "Even though secretly I was dreaming of make-outs with Claire Danes. I thought my crush on Jared Leto vetoed my secret girl crush on Claire Danes. Maybe that was society weighing down on me. Perhaps it was peer pressure keeping me inside the lines of heterosexuality. Or likely, I just liked them both."

Based on your letter, ANON, Tegan suspects that you might like both. "Sexuality is not hard lines," she said. "It's not black and white. Not for all of us, anyway. Some people know their whole lives who they are. Some people don't. My advice: Go and kiss a girl, go and hold a boy's hand. Don't worry about who you are until you find out what you like. Maybe you'll like both—and yay if that's the way it turns out, because that means you have twice as many people to fall in love with."

And while Tegan doesn't think a person's sexuality can change overnight, she believes—she knows from personal experience—that a person's awareness of their sexuality can change overnight. "You can have an awakening," she said. "Like I did when I first kissed a girl. A whole new world can absolutely be waiting for you if you end up feeling up to exploring it. Good luck!"

I'm a twentysomething professional snowboarder. I have a problem that I don't really have anybody to talk to about. When I jerk it, I have to put a finger in my asshole to finish. Plain and simple, that's the only way I can come. I've tried to learn to come without the finger, but I can never reach climax. I can't even come in a girl's pussy without sneaking a finger in my back door. I go to great lengths to hide it—push her head in a pillow, etc.—because I don't want them to think I'm gay. (I have no problem with other people being gay, just FYI. It's just that you do not want snowboard groupies thinking you're gay. Girls talk, and then you never get laid again and all of your bros find out you're sticking things up your butt.) This letter is actually time-sensitive. I'm pretty distraught that last night one of my regular chicks saw me do it! Today she won't return my texts. I want to convince her I was scratching an itch or something. I'm worried it might already be out there that I'm "gay." How do I learn to come without prostate stimulation?

Butt-Using Manly Man Entirely Distressed

I get a dozen letters a week from girls whose boyfriends "can't come." These girls tell me that their boyfriends get hard and stay hard and seem to enjoy fucking them—and fucking em and fucking em—but no matter how long their boyfriends fuck em, their boyfriends never climax. Invariably, these girls ask me if their boyfriends are gay. Because otherwise they would come during straight sex, right?

Your letter made me wonder how many of these girls are dating guys like you, BUMMED. That is, guys who need a poke in the prostate in order to come but either haven't figured that out yet or know it but don't wanna risk it in front of their girlfriends because their girlfriends might think they were gay if they did that. But their girlfriends think they're gay anyway—because they're not poking and not coming.

So it looks like you're damned if you do and damned if you don't. Stick a finger in your butt and come, and your girlfriend—excuse me, your groupiefriend—might think you're "gay." Don't stick a finger in your butt and don't come, and your groupiefriend might think you're "gay."

A few suggestions: Get a butt plug. It's a butt toy that your sphincter muscles hold in place, and once you get it in, it won't slip out. Provided your groupiefriends aren't touching your asshole or looking directly at it, they won't even know it's there. And a butt plug might help you break the strong mental association you've made between finger-in-hole and climaxing. A few dozen look-ma-no-finger-in-hole orgasms, courtesy of a butt plug, might help you transition to look-ma-nothing-in-my-hole orgasms.

Get a girlfriend. I'm not a noted proponent of monogamous coupling, so please don't dismiss this as standard-issue advice-professional moralizing. But you might benefit from opening up to one person, someone you can trust with your secret—that will require an investment of time and emotional energy, however. But the payoff could be huge. Imagine having sex with someone you didn't have to hide from, someone who you didn't have to worry about judging you because she understood.

Get over yourself. You're a heterosexual guy who needs to be on the receiving end of a little anal play during heterosexual sex in order to get off heterosexually. There are lots of straight guys like you out there. Your sexuality isn't the problem, your need for prostate stimulation isn't the problem. The problem is your shame and your desire to hide this aspect of your sexuality from your groupies and your bros. You may not be gay, but you do need to come out. ●

Find the *Savage Lovecast* (my weekly podcast) every Tuesday at TheStranger.com/savage

mail@savagelove.net

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE TS No. 12-0034551 Doc ID #[illegible] Title Order No. [illegible] Investor/Insurer No. [illegible] APN No. [illegible] YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST DATED 05/06/2010. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDING AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. Notice is hereby given that RECONTRUST COMPANY, N.A., as duly appointed trustee pursuant to the Deed of Trust executed by ANITA M. ALLEYNE, AN UNMARRIED WOMAN, dated 05/06/2010 and recorded 5/13/2010, as Instrument No. [illegible], in Book , Page , of Official Records in the office of the County Recorder of Alameda County, State of California, will sell on 08/31/2012 at 12:30PM, At the Fallon Street entrance to the County Courthouse, 1225 Fallon Street, Oakland, CA 94612 at public auction, to the highest bidder for cash or check as described below, payable in full at time of sale, all right, title, and interest conveyed to and now held by it under said Deed of Trust, in the property situated in said County and State and as more fully described in the above referenced Deed of Trust. The street address and other common designation, if any, of the real property described above is purported to be: 6 ADMIRAL DRIVE, UNIT A-387, EMERYVILLE, CA, 94608. The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. 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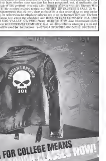
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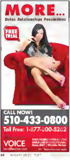
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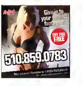
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